



Book	Policy Manual
Section	READY for 4-11-23
Title	Copy of RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES
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8800 - ~~RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC CEREMONIES~~ACTIVITIES AND OBSERVANCES

~~Decisions of the United States Supreme Court have made it clear that it is not the province of a public school to advance or inhibit religious beliefs or practices. Under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, this remains the inviolate province of the individual and the worship center, if any, of the individual's choice. The rights of any minority, no matter how small, must be protected. No matter how well intended, either official or unofficial sponsorship of religiously oriented activities by the school are offensive to some and tend to supplant activities which should be the exclusive province of individual religious groups, private organizations, or the family.~~ The Board acknowledges that the U.S. Constitution prohibits it from adopting any policy or rule promoting or establishing a religion or any policy that unlawfully restricts any person's free exercise of the individual right to worship enjoyed by all persons. Within the confines to this legal framework, the Board adopts the following policy to address the scope of these rights and the District's authority within its own facilities or during events.

As public employees, while on duty and acting within the scope of employment or pursuant to official duties, District staff members shall not use prayer, religious readings, or religious symbols as a devotional exercise or in an act of worship or celebration. Staff are expected to avoid circumstances where the staff member's expression of religious views could be reasonably construed as an endorsement or approval of the message by the school or District. Nothing in this policy or its application shall serve to prohibit or interfere with any staff member's free exercise of their religious views in circumstances not covered by this policy.

Nothing in this policy prohibits teaching about various religions and religious practices in a manner consistent with any adopted District course curriculum. This instruction may include discussion of religious holidays and customs in a manner related to the curriculum that does not give the appearance of an endorsement of one religion over other religions or favoring either a system or religious beliefs or of other beliefs, such as atheism or agnosticism. Observance of religious holidays through devotional exercises or acts of worship is also prohibited.

Distribution of any outside organization's materials, including a request by any person wishing to facilitate dissemination of materials on District property may make a request in accordance with Policy 7510 and AG 7510A - Use of District Facilities and Policy 9700 - Relations with Non-School Affiliated Groups and AG 9700A - Distribution of Materials to Students.

~~The Board acknowledges that it is prohibited from adopting any~~ Students are not prohibited by this policy or ~~rule respecting or promoting an establishment of religion or prohibiting any student from~~ **any guideline promulgated pursuant to this policy, from engaging in** the free, individual, and voluntary exercise or expression of the student's religious beliefs.

However, such exercise or expression may be limited to lunch periods or other non-instructional time periods when students are free to associate , or on an individual basis in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process.

~~Observance of religious holidays through devotional exercises or acts of worship is also prohibited. Acknowledgment of, explanation of, and teaching about religious holidays of various religions is encouraged.~~ Celebration activities involving nonreligious decorations and use of secular works are permitted, but it is the responsibility of all faculty members to ensure that such activities are strictly voluntary, do not place an atmosphere of social compulsion or ostracism on ~~minority~~ groups or individuals, and do not interfere with the regular school program.

The Board shall not conduct or sanction a baccalaureate service in conjunction with graduation ceremonies.

The Board shall not include religious invocations, benedictions, or formal prayer at any school-sponsored event.

~~In accordance with the U.S. Flag Code requirements, the flag of the United States shall be raised above each school and/or at other appropriate places during all school sessions.~~

~~Professional staff members are authorized to lead students in the Pledge of Allegiance or the National Anthem at an appropriate time each school day. No student may be compelled against the student's objections or those of the student's parents to recite the Pledge or sing the National Anthem.~~

~~Every school in the District shall offer the Pledge of Allegiance or the National Anthem each school day in grades 1 through 12. District staff conducting these activities shall protect the rights and the privacy of a nonparticipating student.~~

T.C. 11/8/22

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Legal 118.06(2), Wis. Stats.
 20 U.S.C. 4071 et seq.
 29 C.F.R. 1910.1030

Last Modified by Coleen Frisch on April 3, 2023