

RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM

The Board of Education believes that an understanding of religions and their effects on civilization is essential to the thorough education of young people and to their appreciation of a pluralistic society. To that end, curriculum may include, as appropriate to the various ages and attainments of the students, instruction about the religions of the world.

The Board acknowledges the degree to which a religious consciousness has permeated the arts, literature, music, and issues of morality. The instructional and resource materials approved for use in the District schools frequently contain religious references or concern moral issues that have traditionally been the focus of religious concern. That such materials may be religious in nature shall not, by itself, bar their use by the District. The Board directs that professional staff members employing such materials be neutral in their approach and avoid using them to advance or inhibit religion in any way.

The Board recognizes that religious traditions vary in their perceptions and doctrines regarding the natural world and its processes. The curriculum is chosen for its place in the education of the District's students, not for its conformity to religious principles. Students should receive unbiased instruction in the schools, so they may privately accept or reject the knowledge thus gained, in accordance with their own religious tenets.

Accordingly, no student shall be exempted from attendance in a required course of study on the grounds that the instruction therein interferes with the free exercise of his/her religion.

~~A teacher may provide for a brief period of silence at the beginning of the school day only for the purposes of silent prayer or reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.~~ ***In accordance with the Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act, each teacher in charge of a classroom shall observe a brief period of silence with the participation of all the students in the classroom at the beginning of each school day. Note that this period shall not be conducted as a religious exercise, but it shall be an opportunity for the silent prayer or reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.***

The Superintendent shall prepare administrative guidelines which ensure that students are not influenced to accept a particular religious belief or point of view.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
GENEVA COMMUNITY UNIT
SCHOOL DISTRICT #304**

PROGRAM
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20 U.S.C. Section 7904, U.S. Constitutional Amendment 1
105 ILC 20/0.01 et seq.

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