

Religious-Related Activities and Practices

The district recognizes that views and opinions regarding the relationship of the school and religion are diverse. While community opinions are important in shaping policy, the district must adhere to the United States and Washington State Constitutions and the decisions made by the respective courts when establishing guidelines for making decisions regarding the use of school facilities for religious-related activities and practices. The district further accepts the declaration of the State Board of Education (SBE) that "all students ... possess the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion and to have their schools free from sectarian control or influence." The district is also cognizant of Article 1, Section 11 of our State Constitution which states in part that: "No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or instruction, or the support of any religious establishment."

To this end, the district hereby establishes the following guidelines for the use of school facilities for religious-related activities and practices. The activities or practices set forth in these guidelines shall not materially interfere with or substantially disrupt the normal operations of the school district, nor shall they reflect adversely upon the school district.

1. Instruction about religious matters and/or using religious materials shall be conducted in an objective, non-devotional manner provided such instruction serves a secular educational purpose.
2. A student may decline to participate in a classroom activity that is contrary to his/her religious convictions.
3. Consistent with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), non-curriculum related secondary student groups are permitted to meet on school premises at non-instructional times, which means between the times when actual daily classroom instruction begins and after actual daily classroom instruction ends. Secondary students who attend a particular school shall be permitted to meet on school premises before or after school hours to discuss political, religious, philosophical or other speech content, provided such group meetings voluntary, student-initiated and student-arranged and the meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of activities within the school. Employees of the district may be present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity. Non-school persons may not direct, conduct, or control student meetings held in accordance with this Section 3.
4. Religious groups may rent school facilities under the limited policy 4330, providing for facilities rental. Rental of facilities for religious meetings after school hours may occur, provided activities of religious groups renting district facilities shall be clearly separated from school sponsored activities, so that the school district does not support or appear to support the establishment of religion.
5. Music, art and drama activities with a religious theme that are associated with the tradition of a particular holiday may be presented in a non-devotional manner, be related to the objective of the instructional program, and be accompanied by comparable artistic works of a non-religious nature.
6. Students' constitutional rights of freedom of speech or expression provide for the opportunity to distribute written materials on school district premises. Distribution by students of materials

which are not a part of class activities or are non-school owned and non-school prepared shall not occur during the instructional day on school district premises. Distribution of materials by students before or after the instructional day shall not cause disruption of or interference with school activities and shall follow operational procedure 3222 Student Distribution of Materials.

7. Material and/or announcements of a religious nature which are adult-generated or organizationally produced by an outside organization and which are designed to promote religion or to proselytize may not be distributed or broadcast to students on school premises by non-students in accordance with operational procedures 3222 and 4320.
8. A student, upon the request of a parent(s)/guardian(s), may be excused to participate in religious instruction for a portion of a school day, provided the activity is not conducted on school district premises, and provided that the timing allows for continuous, non-interrupted learning during the school day.
9. A parent may request that a student be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday.
10. Students may wear religious attire or symbols, provided they are not materially and substantially disruptive to the educational process.
11. Banquets, assemblies, commencement exercises, and other school sponsored events shall be free from religious influence, including invocations and benedictions.
12. Students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff who object to religious, political, philosophical or other speech content, practices or activities conducted in the school district may register their concern with the building principal and subsequently the district superintendent.

Cross References:

- (cf.: 0100 – Commitment to Strategic Planning)
- (cf.: 0560 – Strategies)
- (cf.: 2150 – Co-curriculum Activities)
- (cf.: 2153 – Non curriculum-related groups)
- (cf.: 2341 – Religion and the Curriculum)
- (cf.: 2342 – Religious Holidays and Observances)
- (cf.: 2343 – Religious-related Assemblies, Banquets, Baccalaureates and Commencement)
- (cf.: 2344 – Prayer and Devotional Activities)
- (cf.: 3122 – Student Absences)
- (cf.: 3220 – Freedom of Expression)
- (cf.: 3222 – Student Distribution of Materials)
- (cf.: 3223 – Freedom of Assembly)
- (cf.: 3224 – Student Dress)
- (cf.: 3511 – Secondary Student Group Meetings)
- (cf.: 4311 – Complaint Regarding School Program or Personnel)
- (cf.: 4320 – Contacts with Students Promoted by Outside Agencies)
- (cf.: 4321 – Contests, Advertising and Promotions)

(cf.: 4322 – Public Performance)
(cf.: 4330 – Public Use of School District Facilities)

Legal References:

RCW 28A.320.510 Night schools, summer schools, meetings, use of facilities for 121 U.S. Supreme Court 2093 (2001)

Wash. Const. Art IX, S 4

Wash. Const. Art I, S 11

Wash. Const. Art XXVI

Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 4071 et seq.

U. S. Constitution: First Amendment, Fourteenth Amendment

Adoption Date:

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