

Book	Policy Manual
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Title	Vol. 39, No. 1 - August 2020 Revised RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM
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2270 - RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM

Based on the First Amendment protection against the establishment of religion in the schools, no Board employee will promote religion in the classroom or in the Educational Service Center's curriculum, or compel or pressure any student to participate in devotional exercises. Displays of a religious character must conform with Policy 8800 **(X)** and AG 8800 A-C. Instructional activities shall not be permitted to advance or inhibit any particular religion or religion generally.

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:

~~(-) shall be developed to include~~

(X) 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 Center's 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 in the Center. 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 Center'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. However, if after careful, personal review of the program's lessons and/or materials, a parent indicates to the school that either the content or activities conflict with his/her religious beliefs or value system, the school will honor a written request for his/her child to be excused from ~~(-) a particular class period~~ **(X)** particular class periods **[END-OF-OPTION]** for specified reasons. The student will be provided with alternate learning activities during the times of such parent requested absence.

No classroom teacher shall be prohibited from providing reasonable periods of time for activities of a moral, philosophical, or patriotic theme. No student shall be required to participate in such activities if they are contrary to the religious convictions of the student or his/her parents or guardians.

[X] Students shall not be prohibited from engaging in religious expression in the completion of homework, artwork, or other written or oral assignments. Such assignments will be graded in the same manner as any other assignments. Students will neither be penalized nor rewarded based on the religious content of the student's work.

The Board acknowledges that it may not adopt any policy or rule respecting or promoting an establishment of religion or prohibiting any student from 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 noninstructional time periods when students are free to associate.~~

See Reference: Policy 8800

See References: AGs 8800 A-C

U.S. Consti. Amend. 1

R.C. 3313.601, 3320.01, 3320.02, 3320.03

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R.C. 3313.601, 3320.01, 3320.02, 3320.03