

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196
Rosemount, Minnesota
Educating our students to reach their full potential

Series Number 605.5.1AR Adopted August 1982 Revised January 1988

Title Religiously Sensitive Issues Concerning the Schools

1. **Customs, practices and policies that may not be permitted in schools include:**

- 1.1 Religious worship or indoctrination in school-sponsored programs.
- 1.2 Compulsory reading from the Bible as part of a non-instructional activity.
- 1.3 Promotion or indoctrination of any religion or ideology including theism, atheism, agnosticism, humanism, secularism or sectarianism.
- 1.4 Prayers, whether or not composed, authorized or sanctioned by school officials.
- 1.5 Sectarian instruction offered to students at any time or through any school-sponsored activity.
- 1.6 Official public school musical groups participating under the auspices of the public school in religious services.
- 1.7 Non-student or student members of religious groups in the school to proselytize or recruit during the school day or during school activities.
- 1.8 Official posting or display of religious documents such as the Ten Commandments and other religious symbols, except when related to the curriculum.
- 1.9 Celebration of religious holy days and the fostering of a religious spirit.
- 1.10 Facilitating or allowing the distribution of sectarian literature, including Bibles and religious tracts, in the schools by school staff and non-school persons, unless directly related to the approved curriculum.

2. **Customs, practices and policies that may be permitted include:**

- 2.1 Schools may use the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Koran, the Talmud or other religious books as source books in teaching about religions.
- 2.2 Schools should recognize the multiplicity of explanations related to human origins in the appropriate place in the curriculum.
- 2.3 A student has the right to pray privately at any time.
- 2.4 Schools may offer objective instruction about religion as literature and as history, and religion's role in the history of civilization.

- 2.5 Students are free to recite documents such as the Declaration of Independence which contain references to God.
 - 2.6 Students may sing the national anthem and other patriotic songs which contain assertions of faith in God.
 - 2.7 Rhetorical or personal references to religious faith in connection with patriotic or ceremonial occasions are permissible. This includes invocations at the ceremonial-type events such as graduation and banquets.
 - 2.8 Students may be dismissed for sectarian instruction off school premises. (M.S. 120.10, Subd. 3)
 - 2.9 Students may be excused from engaging in an activity which offends that student's religious belief or conscience.
 - 2.10 The school calendar, vacations and holidays may be scheduled to permit observances of religious holy days. When school is scheduled on a religious holy day, students shall be excused for observance of the holy day upon the request of their parents.
3. **Independent School District 196 recognizes that religious belief systems have played a significant part in the development of cultures.**
- 3.1 Classroom instruction in the area of religious holy days or celebrations, should be carefully tied to educational objectives. These educational objectives should be specified in writing and should be consistent with the overall school curriculum.
 - 3.2 Information about religious belief systems and symbolic displays may be a part of the planned curriculum:
 - 3.2.1 As long as the information is shared without advocacy or judgement by the teacher; and it is appropriate to the content being studied.
 - 3.2.2 Whenever a religious belief has played a significant role in a geographical area being studied;
 - 3.2.3 Whenever a religious belief has played a significant role in an event/culture being studied;
 - 3.2.4 Whenever the philosophical aspects of a religion are being explained or compared.

* The above regulation sections 1 and 2 were developed by the Curriculum Development Task Force on Religiously Sensitive Customs, Practices and Policies and were approved by the Minnesota State Board of Education on June 8, 1981.