

Section 7000 – Instructional Program

7800 School Ceremonies and Observations (Cf. 7770)

7800

Opening Exercises

Classrooms may open the school day with appropriate exercises. Such may include the pledge to the flag of the United States of America, patriotic songs, and reading of excerpts of material, which will implement the development of moral values, patriotism, and high standards of conduct. A student who expresses a religious objection to repeating the pledge to the flag shall not be required to participate. However, such students shall not cause a disturbance or interfere with the participation of others.

Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs

Employees of the District shall neither promote nor disparage any religious belief or non-belief. The Board encourages all students and staff members to appreciate and to be tolerant of each other's religious views. The Board shall utilize its authority to foster understanding and mutual respect among students and parent(s)/guardian(s), whether it involves race, culture, economic background, or religious belief. Students and staff members may be excused from participating in practices that are contrary to their religious beliefs unless there are clear issues and overriding concerns that would prevent it.

The Board, through its instructional program, shall attempt to advance all student's knowledge and appreciation of the role that religious heritage has played in the social, cultural and historical development of civilization.

Federal Requirements

As required by the No Child Left Behind Act, by October 1 of each year, the Superintendent will certify in writing to the state that students of the District are not prevented by policy or rule from participating in constitutionally protected prayer. The Superintendent will ensure that the staff, parent(s)/guardian(s), and students are made aware of the parameters of acceptable religious speech and actions.

The Superintendent will also distribute guidelines to each school concerning religion in the schools, after the guidelines/regulations have been approved by the Board attorney and reviewed by the Board.

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In accordance with federal law¹, the District shall offer an educational program(s) each year on Constitution Day to commemorate the September 17, 1787 signing of the United States Constitution.² The Superintendent shall establish administrative guidelines ensuring that the District observes Constitution Day properly and in a manner befitting the importance of the event to the history of the United States of America.

Approved: June 29, 2009

LEGAL REF: MCL 380.1175; 380.1217; *Lee v. Weisman*, 112 S. Ct. 2649 (1992); NCLB; Section 111 of Division J of Public Law 108-447 (2004).

¹ Section 111 of Division J of Public Law 108-447

² Constitution Day shall be held on September 17th of each year. However, if September 17th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, then Constitution Day shall be held during the preceding or following week.