

TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION

Code **IHAL** Issued **9/10**

Purpose: To establish the board's vision for teaching about religion in the district schools.

The contribution of religions to civilizations is one of the crucial keys to understanding human history and development. Therefore, the study of religious history and traditions should be part of the school curriculum. Study can play a vital role in enhancing an understanding among people of different religious backgrounds and beliefs. Study should give neither preferential nor derogatory treatment to any single religion or to religion in general and should not be introduced or utilized for devotional purposes.

Neither the district nor its employees will promote or disparage any religious belief or non-belief. Instead, the district will encourage all students and staff members to appreciate and tolerate each other's religious views.

The district supports the inclusion of religious literature, music, drama and the arts in the curriculum and in school activities, provided it is intrinsic to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively.

The district will accommodate student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme. For example, students are free to express a religious belief or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech and debate.

Adopted 8/13/91; Revised 4/12/05, 9/14/10

Legal references:

A. S. C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 59-17-140 - Religion and public schools training for teachers and administrators.
2. Section 59-29-230 - Old and New Testament era courses.
3. Section 59-1-435 - Religious Viewpoints Antidiscrimination Act.

B. Court cases:

1. Wynne v. Town of Great Falls, 376 F.3d 292 (4th Cir. 2004).