

Lebanon Community Schools

Code: **IGACA**
Adopted: 1/8/01
Readopted: 12/16/10
Orig. Code(s): IGACA

Treatment of Religion in Schools

Religious instruction is a private concern. Therefore, District schools must remain neutral regarding religion. District staff should foster respect for each individual's convictions about religion and respect for all religions in general.

Factual and objective teaching about religion is to be distinguished from the teaching of religion. The district should utilize its opportunity to foster understanding and mutual respect among students and parents, whether it involves race, culture, economic background or religious beliefs. For example, religion is often a factor to be considered in history, art, literature or music. Teachers may speak of religious holidays but may not advocate the religious observance of such holidays in the school. In the spirit of tolerance, students and staff members will be excused from participating in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs without penalty.

Reading of religious scriptures for historical or literary Instructional purposes is appropriate. However, reading of religious scriptures may not be used for devotional purposes or to influence religious beliefs. The distribution of Scriptures or portions thereof to students on school property is not legal and therefore, cannot be permitted.

Recitations of prayers in classes also is not legal and cannot be required by school officials.

Religious music as part of a secular program or concert shall be permitted. School choruses and bands may accept invitations to perform at non-school religious functions only on the condition that any member of the group may be excused at his/her request without penalty.

Baccalaureate services shall not be organized by school staff or sponsored by district schools.

Dual enrollment whereby students who wish may pursue a portion of their studies in a district school and another portion in a religiously affiliated school is permissible and the district should cooperate with parents and nonpublic school officials in making such arrangements.

Release time for participation in religious instruction is granted as provided in Oregon Revised Statutes.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 336.067](#)
[ORS 339.420](#)