

INSTRUCTION

Religious Holidays and Observances

The board recognizes that the school must neither promote nor inhibit religion. Since several holidays have both a religious and cultural foundation in our society, the origin of such holidays may be presented in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination.

Since a variety of activities are included as part of a holiday theme, care must be exercised to focus on the historical and secular aspects of the holiday rather than its devotional meanings. Music programs shall not use the religious aspect of a holiday as the underlying message or theme. Pageants, plays and other dramatic activities shall not be used to convey religious messages. Religious symbols such as nativity scenes, if used, shall be displayed in conjunction with a variety of secular holiday symbols so that the total presentation emphasizes the cultural rather than religious significance of the holiday.

Staff shall avoid assigning work that emphasizes the religious aspects of a holiday. Individual students should be allowed, at their own direction, to use religious personages, events or symbols as a vehicle for artistic expression.

The above restrictions do not preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays and religious differences. Such instruction can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all citizens in a pluralistic society.

Cross References:	Board Policy 2340	Religious-Related Activities or Practices
Legal References:	U.S. Constitution	First Amendment
	U.S. Constitution	Fourteenth Amendment
	Washington Constitution	Article 9, §§ 4 and Article 26

Date: 7/25/85; 3/24/97; 3/25/02; 11/22/04.