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Statement of.....

Policy and Responsibility

SUBJECT: RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM AND SCHOOL SPONSORED
ACTIVITIES

The Murray City School District Board of Education recognizes the diversity of culture and religious background of its citizens and student body. The Board recognizes the necessity for sensitivity as to the needs and rights of the students regarding religion and religious freedom. It is the policy of the Board to meet the provisions of the Utah Code 53G-10-203 and the Utah Administrative Code R277-105-9.

Implementation Procedures/Guidelines are as follows:

1. At the beginning of each school year, each principal shall review with the teachers and staff the policy regarding Religion in the Curriculum and School Sponsored Activities, these procedures and the related statutes and rules.
2. The district encourages parents, legal guardians and students to discuss and if possible resolve with the responsible teachers or employees any concerns regarding curricular content, activities or student participation. Any student, parent or legal guardian who either (1) has a complaint that a particular curriculum or activity violates state or federal law or (2) desires or requests a waiver of participation or substitution of another activity as provided in Utah Administrative code R277-105-5, shall direct that complaint or request to the school principal.
3. The principal shall keep a written record of every complaint or request and any decisions made regarding the complaint or request. If a complaint or request is made by a student who is a minor, the principal shall give written notice to the student's parent or legal guardian by letter addressed to the parent's or legal guardian's last known address.
 - A. The principal, student, the student's parent or legal guardian and the teacher or employee responsible for the program or activity in question shall meet to discuss the student's complaint or request. The principal shall encourage the student and student's parent or guardian to suggest a reasonable alternative. The principal shall arrive at a decision, consistent with state law, of whether to alter the curriculum or activity, waive participation, substitute another activity or require participation by the student. In making a decision, the principal shall give proper consideration to any suggestions made by the student and the student's parent or guardian. The principal shall give a written decision when practical under the circumstances.

- B. A student, parent, or legal guardian who is dissatisfied with the principal's decision, may appeal that decision within ten (10) days to the District Office Committee composed of the Superintendent, Director of Student Services and the Director of Teaching and Learning. The committee shall review the complaint or request of the student, parent or legal guardian and the decision of the principal and may modify the principal's decision. The committee must keep a written record of every appeal and the decision made regarding the appeal. Information about the complaint may be requested from educators at the student's school, the parent or legal guardian, the student and patrons. If the District Committee decides to request additional information, the student and the student's parent or guardian shall be notified. Before permitting participation by parents or patrons, the Superintendent must explain to the student and student's parent or guardian that they are waiving their privacy rights under state and federal law. This decision must be documented.
- C. Any parent, legal guardian or student who is dissatisfied with the decision of the District Committee, may within ten (10) days of notice of that decision, request that the decision be reviewed by the Board of Education of the Murray City School District. The decision of the Board shall be final.
4. Once a student, parent or legal guardian has requested a waiver of participation or substitution of another activity, the student shall not be compelled to participate in any curriculum or activity pending the resolution of both appeals unless the Superintendent has determined that requiring the participation of that particular student is the least restrictive means necessary to achieve a specifically identified educational objective in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest.
5. The Principal's written record of the complaint or request for waiver shall be submitted by the principal to the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Director shall either personally or by a committee of their choosing, evaluate the curriculum or activity and decide whether the educational objectives could be achieved by less intrusive means that would not violate state or federal law, or interfere with the rights of conscience or exercise of religious freedom of student(s), parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
6. At least once a year students, parents and legal guardians shall be notified of their rights under this policy, state law and the state board rules. The content of the notice shall contain at least the following information:
- Any parent or legal guardian of a student or a secondary school student may make a complaint to the principal that any part of the curriculum or a school activity violates state or federal law.
- In addition, any parent or legal guardian of a student or a secondary school student may make a request to the principal for a waiver of participation in any portion of the curriculum or school activity that the student, parent or legal guardian believes to be an infringement of his or her right of conscience or the exercise of religious freedom in any of the following ways:
- A. It would require the affirmation or denial of a religious belief or right of conscience;

- B. It would require participation in a practice forbidden by a religious belief or practice, or right of conscience; or
- C. It would bar participation in a practice required by a religious belief or practice, or right of conscience.

A copy of this policy, rules and related statutes and regulations regarding Religion in the Curriculum & School Sponsored Activities is available upon request at the school or district office, or online at www.murrayschools.org/board-of-education.