

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

POLICY

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Religion/Religion in Schools

**CMS/NEPN Code:
ACD**

Teachers and other staff members shall incorporate the highest standards of honesty, integrity and morality in all of their teaching, counseling, and other contacts with students. Because there are students, teachers and staff of many religious faiths, convictions and beliefs in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, school staff members must be sensitive to the freedom of religion and other Constitutional rights of all. The following guidelines on religion and religious practices in the schools are provided in order to avoid infringement of individual rights and to set forth the Board's position concerning certain religious issues:

1. Teachers may include religion's role in appropriate subjects in the curriculum, such as literature, history, the humanities, and the arts. Neither teachers nor guest speakers shall promote religion and should use fairness and objectivity when presenting subjects that address religion.
2. Staff shall be sensitive to how religious holidays may impact the behavior, appearance or attendance of students and staff. Examinations and other major events will not be scheduled on religious holidays designated by the Superintendent. School personnel shall use sensitivity and good judgement when scheduling school activities.
3. Students who miss school because of religious reasons should not be adversely affected because of the absence.
4. School personnel should avoid activities or assignments that would be deemed to be objectionable on religious grounds. If a parent should object to an activity, school personnel will grant parent's written request to have a student excused. An equivalent alternative activity will be provided for the student.
5. The temporary use of religious symbols, seasonal celebrations, and music is permitted. An effort towards diversity and mutual respect is expected.
6. A moment of silence not to exceed one minute in duration is permitted for quiet reflection provided that no further instructions are given on how the period of silence is to be used.

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Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. § 115C-47 (29b)

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7. Historical survey courses which offer an elective credit in social studies or which offer an elective credit in language arts, may include the teaching of sacred writings and are permitted as part of the high school curriculum.
8. Appropriate religious books may be given to students as a part of coursework but may not be generally distributed by religious groups to students at school.
9. Students may read religious materials during the school day except when it interferes with classroom work or other school activities.
10. No restrictions shall be placed on prayer by individual students or groups of students as long as it does not interfere in any way with the school program.
11. Religious groups or clubs may be organized and meet on school premises before or after school or during time designated by the principal for non-instructional activities, with the same privileges as other non-curriculum related school clubs.
12. School personnel may read religious materials and pray on their free time and may carry or wear religious symbols when on duty at school as long as it does not interfere with their work. Principals and other administrative personnel should be sensitive to and show respect for religious beliefs held by other employees and students. In dealing with religious issues, they should do so in a manner that will not show or imply favor or disfavor with any employee's or student's religious beliefs.
13. Religious groups, just as any other nonschool related group, will be permitted use of school facilities provided there is no conflict with school activities and Board policy and administrative regulations KF-R are followed.
14. Graduation exercises assemblies and other school-sponsored events will not include centrally led or school system sanctioned group prayer but may include a moment of silence in accordance with paragraph 6.

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Individuals students and groups of students may pray in accordance with paragraph 10 of this policy.

15. Counseling of students or informal discussions with students by school personnel shall neither infringe on the students' religious beliefs nor seek to influence student's religious beliefs.
16. In scheduling speakers for classes and school assembly programs, schools may schedule motivational speakers. Guest speakers will not promote religion.

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