

7370 RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM

Religion has impacted art, literature, and history past and present. An education excluding all materials with references to religion would be incomplete. Therefore materials containing religious themes needs to be taught in a factual, objective, and respectful manner.

Therefore, the practice of the Grand Island Public Schools shall be as follows:

- The District allows religious themes in literature, music, drama, history, and the arts in when it pertains to 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 emphasis on religious themes in the arts, literature, and history should be only as extensive as necessary for a balance and comprehensive study of these areas. Such studies should never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious beliefs.
- Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated.

RECOGNITION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS

It is accepted that no religious belief or non-belief should be promoted by the school district or its employees, and none should be disparaged. Instead, the ~~school~~-district should encourage all students and staff members to appreciate and be tolerant of each other's religious views. The ~~school~~ 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. In that spirit of tolerance, students and staff members should be excused from participating in practices that are contrary to their religious beliefs.

School administrators may support informal conversations with parents and students to find a mutually agreed upon solution that allows the students to fulfil their religious prayer requirement without excessive entanglement with the school. Schools may not dedicate a space as a mosque, prayer room or meditation room, and may not release students from classes to attend a prayer service in the school building, as this maybe viewed as excessive entanglement.

The Grand Island Public Schools recognizes that one of its educational goals is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that our religious heritage has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.

OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

The practice of the Grand Island School Public Schools shall be as follows:

- The several holidays throughout the year which have a religious and a secular basis may be observed in the public schools.
- The historical and contemporary values and the origin of religious holidays may be explained in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination.
- Music, art, literature, and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs, if presented in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday.
- The use of religious symbols such as a cross, menorah, crescent, Star of David, creche, symbols of Native American religious or other symbols that are part of a religious holiday is permitted as a teaching aid or resource provided such symbols are displayed as an example of the cultural and religious heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature.

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