

Series 600 – Educational Program

Policy Title: RELIGION-BASED EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL PROGRAM

Policy Code No. 602.23

Parents/guardians who wish to have their child excluded from a school program because of religious beliefs must inform the superintendent or designee. The Board of Directors authorizes the administration to allow the exclusion if it is not disruptive to the educational process and it does not infringe on a compelling state or educational interest. The exclusion must not interfere with other school district operations. Further, for the purposes of religious exclusions from P.E. and health, specific policies exist.

In notifying the superintendent or designee, the parents/guardians shall abide by the following:

- The notice shall be in writing;
- The objection shall be based on religious beliefs;
- The objection shall state which activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;
- The objection shall state why these activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;
- The objection may state a proposed alternate activity or study.

The superintendent or designee shall have sole discretion to make this determination. The factors the superintendent or designee shall consider when the students/parents/guardians request that the student be excluded from a program or activity because of religious beliefs include, but are not limited to, staff available to supervise a student who wishes to be excluded, space to house the student while the student is excluded, available district-approved alternative course of study or activity while the student is excluded, number of students who wish to be excluded, whether allowing the exclusion places the school in a position that it is supporting a particular religion, and whether the program or activity is required for promotion to the next grade level or for graduation.

Students who are allowed to be excluded from a program or activity which violates their religious beliefs shall be required to do an alternate supervised activity or study. The superintendent or designee shall work with the students/parents/guardians to determine alternate activity or study for the student.

Date of Adoption 08/14/1989

Review Date 08/13/2007

Revision Date 08/27/2001

Series 600 – Educational Program

Legal Ref.: U.S. Const'n amend. I.
Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602, 91 S.Ct. 2105 (1971).
Graham v. Central Community School District of Decatur County, 608 F. Supp. 531
(Iowa 1985).
Iowa Code §§256.11(7), 279.8 (1989).
281 Iowa Admin. Code 12.5(6) (new standards).

Cross Ref.: Board Policy
602.22 Curriculum Development
602.12 Physical Education
602.13 Health Education