

## **Religious-Related Activities or Practices**

### **Purpose**

This policy establishes the protection of students' rights in their expression of religious practices and beliefs or religious-related activities according to the United States and Washington State Constitutions.

### **Scope**

This policy defines responsibilities of the Superintendent, school administrators and staff, and informs parents and students.

### **Policy**

1. The Board of Directors of Valley School District recognizes that views and opinions regarding the relationship of the school and religion are diverse. While community opinions are important in shaping then policy, the board must also give credence to the United States and Washington State Constitutions. The board further accepts the declaration of the state board of education that "all students possess the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion and to have their schools free from sectarian control or influence." To this end, the board hereby establishes the following guidelines to preserve the rights of all students within the framework of the respective constitutions.
2. A student is an individual enrolled in the K-8 program in Valley School District.
3. Instruction about religious matters and/or using religious materials shall be conducted in an objective and neutral manner and shall serve a secular educational purpose.
4. Upon receipt of a parent (s) request, a student may decline to participate in a school activity that is contrary to his/her religious convictions.
5. Non-curricular related student groups are permitted to meet on school premises immediately before or after school hours to discuss political, religious or philosophical or other issues provided such group meetings are student initiated, student managed and in compliance with administrative policy authorizing such meetings.
6. A student of Valley School District may distribute religious literature under the same conditions that other literature may be distributed on the campus provided that such distribution does not intrude on the operation of the school.
7. Material and/or announcements promoting religion may not be distributed by non-students or on behalf of groups or individuals who are not students.
8. Religious services, programs or assemblies that contain elements advocating or disparaging religion shall not be conducted in school facilities during school hours or in connection with any school sponsored or school related activity. Religious groups may rent school facilities under the policy providing for facilities rental. Activities of such groups shall be clearly separated from school sponsored activities so that the school district does not support or appear to support the establishment of religion.

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9. Musical, artistic and dramatic presentations which have a religious theme may be included in course work and programs on the basis of their particular artistic and educational value or traditional secular usage. They shall be presented in a neutral, non-devotional manner and be related to the objectives of the instructional program.
10. As a matter of individual liberty, a student may of his/her own volition engage in private, unobtrusive prayer whenever he/she wishes to do so. School staff shall neither encourage nor discourage a student from engaging in oral or silent prayer or any other form of devotional activity. Students, parents and staff who are aggrieved by practices or activities conducted in the school or district may register their concern with the building principal or district superintendent.

**Related Procedures**

3210P1-Nondiscrimination

**Policy Cross References**

3210-Nondiscrimination

**Policy Legal References**

Chapter 28A.642 RCW – Discrimination prohibition

WAC 392-400-215 – Student Rights

**Management Resources**

N/A

**Policy History**

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Approved by the Board	To Be Determined
Revised	
Revised	
Revised	

Previous Policy Number: 8020