



Book	Policy Manual
Section	Volume 33, No. 1 - November 2020
Title	Revised Policy - Vol. 33, No. 1 - November 2020 - RELIGIOUS/PATRIOTIC CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES
Code	po8800
Status	From Neola
Adopted	April 9, 2013
Last Revised	January 9, 2018

8800 - **RELIGIOUS/PATRIOTIC CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

Decisions of the United States Supreme Court have made it clear that it is not the province of a public school to advance or inhibit religious beliefs or practices. Under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, this remains the inviolate province of the individual and the church of his/her choice. The rights of any minority, no matter how small, must be protected. No matter how well-intended, either official or unofficial sponsorship of religiously-oriented activities by the school are offensive to some and tend to supplant activities which should be the exclusive province of individual religious groups, churches, private organizations, or the family.

School Corporation staff members shall not use prayer, religious readings, or religious symbols as a devotional exercise or an act of worship or celebration. The Corporation shall not act as a disseminating agent for any person or outside agency for any religious or anti-religious document, book, or article. Distribution of such materials on Corporation property by any party shall be in accordance with Policy 7510 and AG 7510A - Use of Corporation Facilities and Policy 9700 and AG 9700 - Relations with Special Interest Groups.

The School Board acknowledges that it is prohibited from adopting any policy or rule respecting or promoting an establishment of religion or prohibiting any person from the free, individual, and voluntary exercise or expression of the individual's religious beliefs. Such exercise or expression may be limited to lunch periods or other non-instructional time periods when individuals are free to associate. However, an individual who is required by his/her religious beliefs to engage in religious exercise (e.g. a formal prayer during the school day) will be accommodated unless such accommodation would disrupt an educational function.

In order that the right of each student to the free exercise of religion is guaranteed within the school and the freedom of each student to either engage in or refrain from religious observation on school grounds is subject to the least possible coercion from the State, the Board shall establish the daily observance of a moment of silence in each classroom or on school grounds.

Observance of religious holidays through devotional exercises or acts of worship is also prohibited. Acknowledgement of, explanation of, and teaching about religious holidays of various religions is encouraged. Celebration activities involving nonreligious decorations and use of secular works are permitted, but it is the responsibility of all faculty members to ensure that such activities are strictly voluntary, do not place an

atmosphere of social compulsion or ostracism on minority groups or individuals, and do not interfere with the regular school program.

The United States flag shall be displayed in each classroom of every school in the ~~School~~ Corporation.

The flags of the United States and of Indiana shall be raised above each school and/or at other appropriate places during all school sessions, weather permitting. The flags shall be raised before the opening of school and taken down at its close every day.

The Board shall provide a daily opportunity for students to voluntarily recite the Pledge of Allegiance in each classroom or on school grounds. A student is exempt from participation and may not be required to participate if the student chooses not to or the student's parent chooses not to have the student participate. The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines which ensure that any staff member who conducts this activity does it at an appropriate time, in an appropriate manner, and with due regard to the need to protect the rights and the privacy of a nonparticipating student.

~~Each classroom teacher and building administrator may post the national motto "In God We Trust" in their classroom or building in a historic and/or patriotic context, but not in a religious setting. Whenever possible, the motto should be placed near the American Flag.~~

The Corporation may place a durable poster or framed picture of the national motto "In God We Trust" and an accurate representation of the United States flag and Indiana State flag positioned under the national motto in each school library and classroom within the Corporation. The durable poster or framed picture must meet the specifications outlined by State statute. The representation of the United States flag and the Indiana State flag must comply with any applicable federal or state laws concerning the design, dimensions, or presentation of the respective flags.

© Neola 2020

Legal	I.C. 1-1-11-2
	I.C. 1-2-2-1
	I.C. 1-2-3-6
	I.C. 20-30-3-5
	I.C. 20-30-5-0.5
	I.C. 20-30-5-4.5
	I.C. 20-33-12
	20 U.S.C. 4071 et seq.