IMDC - THE CELEBRATION OF HOLIDAYS

THE CELEBRATION OF HOLIDAYS

Regional School Unit 1 may neither promote nor inhibit religious belief or non-belief, so long as expressions of religious belief or non-belief are consistent with school rules and respect the rights of others.

The Board directs its administrators, teachers, and students, with the cooperation of parents and community, to make practical and reasonable decisions regarding religious holidays when in school. This requires sensitivity to the needs of every student and a willingness to steer a course between the avoidance of all references to religion, on the one hand, and the promotion of religion on the other.

The intent of this policy and related regulations, which reflect and balance the academic and instructional mission of our schools, the law, and legal guidelines related to the separation of church and state, the richness and diversity of our population, and sensitivity to the rights and dignity of the individual, as they relate to the celebration of holidays.

The following guidelines will apply to the celebration of holidays:

A. Holidays, which have a religious origin, may be acknowledged in the public schools.

B. The historical and contemporary values and the origin of those holidays may be explained in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination.

C. Music, art, literature, and drama, having religious themes or basis, will be permitted as part of the curricula for school-sponsored activities and programs, if presented in an objective manner.

1. The duration of such programs and activities, which should be linked to the school’s curriculum, should not exceed a period of time equivalent to the academic value of the program or activity.
2. Activities, including any party-like celebration, should not exceed one hour at the end of the session on the identified day.

D. Symbols that are a part of a religion are permitted provided such symbols are displayed as examples of the cultural and religious heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature.

E. Symbols that are a part of religious holiday, but have acquired a secular meaning are permitted.

F. Acknowledgement of a holiday will emphasize the historical, cultural, and social value of the holiday and the associated religion and will not be used to endorse any religion or holiday.

Cross Reference: ACAAB–Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

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