

Commitment to Religious Neutrality

Notwithstanding anything which may inadvertently still appear in policy, the Board of Education understands that administration and staff must recognize students' First Amendment religious rights. The Board further recognizes that the United States Constitution's First Amendment imposes two equally important obligations on public schools.

First, schools must not forbid students acting on their own from expressing their personal religious views or beliefs. Second, schools may not endorse religious activity or doctrine and students may not coerce participation in religious activity.

Schools must give students the same rights to engage in religious activity and discussion, as they have to engage in other comparable activity. Generally, this means that students may pray in a non-disruptive manner during the school day when they are not engaged in school activity and during the school day when they are not engaged in school activity and instruction, subject to the same rules as apply to other speech.

ADOPTED 2005

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of Colorado, Article 11, Section (*religious freedom*
20 U.S.C. 7904 (*No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*)
C.R.S. 22-1-120 (rights of free expression for public school students)

CROSS REFS.: IB, Academic Freedom
IMB, Teaching about Controversial/Sensitive Issues
IMBB, Exemptions from Required Instruction
JJA-1, Student Organization
JICEC*, Student Distribution of Non-curricular Materials
JICED, Student Expression Rights