

## **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE**

It is the policy of Apple Creek School Board that no religious belief or non-belief will be promoted by the school district or its employees and none will be disparaged. The district will encourage all students and staff members to appreciate and be tolerant of each other's religious views. The district will use all opportunities to foster understanding and mutual respect among students and parents, whether it involves race, culture, economic background, or religious beliefs. Students and staff members will be excused from participating in practices that are contrary to their religious beliefs.

The Board recognizes that one of the district's educational goals is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that our religious heritage has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.

Therefore, the practice of the district will be:

The several holidays throughout the year which have a religious and a secular basis may be discussed in the schools.

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

Music, art, literature, and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs if presented in a prudent and objective manner, and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday.

The school district's calendar should be prepared so as to minimize conflicts with religious holidays of all faiths.

Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments that reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme will be accommodated. For example, students are free to express religious belief or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech, and debate.

Cross Ref: Policy GBDB Teaching About Religion  
Policy GBDBB Displays Including Religious Objects or Documents

Legal Ref: First Amendment, Constitution of the United States  
Constitution of North Dakota  
Florey v. Sioux Falls School District, 8th Cir., 1980

**POLICY ADOPTED: 23 Apr 07**  
**POLICY AMENDED: 21 Aug 09**