

COMMITMENT TO RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY

Category: O

The Board understands that administration and staff must recognize students' First Amendment religious rights, subject to reasonable rules and regulations. 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 school employees may not coerce participation in religious activity.

The Board will act to 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 instruction, subject to the same rules as apply to other speech.

All students should respect the individual religious choices and activities of other students.

Legal References:

New Hampshire Constitution, Part I, Art. 5

20 U.S.C. 7904 (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)

RSA 189:1-b, Freedom of Assembly, Freedom of Religion

SAU #7 Policy Committee: Recommended for Adoption – January 11, 2018

Clarksville School Board: Adopted – March 15, 2018

Colebrook School Board: Adopted – February 20, 2018

Columbia School Board: Adopted – February 7, 2018

Pittsburg School Board: Adopted – February 12, 2018

Stewartstown School Board: Adopted – February 5, 2018