

Religious Beliefs and Practices Policy

The Governing Authority establishes this policy as required by the State of Ohio. The Governing Authority adopts this policy pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 3320.04 as effective on Ohio community schools April 9, 2025.

This policy is to ensure the reasonable accommodation of the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of individual students with regard to all examinations or other academic requirements and absences for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system.

I. Student Rights.

- (1) Each student in grades kindergarten through eighth will be permitted to be absent for up to three (3) religious expression days each school year to take holidays for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system or participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization.
- (2) Each student will be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics or other extracurricular activities on days in which the student was otherwise absent for a religious expression day.
- (3) Each student will be provided with alternative accommodation with regard to examinations and other academic requirements missed due to an absence described in numbers (1) and (2), above, if not later than fourteen (14) school days after the first day of school, or fourteen (14) school days after the date of enrollment for a student who transfers to or enrolls in the district after the first day of school, the parent or guardian of a student provides the school principal with written notice of up to three (3) specific dates for which alternative accommodations are requested, if an absence approved under Section II., "Principal Approval," as provided, below.

II. Principal Approval.

- (1) The school principal shall approve not more than three (3) written requests per school year from a student's parent or guardian for an excused absence under Section I, above.
- (2) The school principal shall approve such requests without inquiry into the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system.
- (3) The school principal may verify a request received under division (A) of this section by contacting the parent or guardian whose signature appears on the request. If a parent or guardian disputes having signed such a request, the school principal may deny the request.
- (4) Upon approval of a request that satisfies items (1) through (3) of this section, the school principal shall require the appropriate classroom teacher or teachers to schedule a time and date for an alternative examination or other academic requirement if the approved student absence creates a conflict, which may be before or after the time and date the examination or other academic requirement was originally scheduled.
- (5) The school principal shall appoint and identify a staff member, which can include the school principal, to be the individual to provide further information about the policy.
- (6) The school principal shall provide each teacher and Governing Authority with a nonexhaustive list

of major religious holidays or festivals for the next two school years, including Eid, Good Friday, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, at the beginning of each school year. The Governing Authority may adopt the school principle's list in its entirety or choose which holidays to include on its list.

III. Placement of this Policy.

- (1) A copy of this policy will be placed in a prominent location on the school website. If the school website is managed by a management company, the management company will be responsible for the placement of the policy on the school website.
- (2) The placement of the policy on the school website shall include the contact information of the individual appointed by the school principal to provide further information about the policy.
- (3) A nonexhaustive list of major religious holidays, festivals, and religious observations, which may include, Eid, Good Friday, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, for which an excused absence under this section shall not be unreasonably withheld or denied will be posted on the school website along with the policy. If the school website is managed by a management company, the management company will be responsible for the placement of the nonexhaustive list on the school website.
- (4) Each time this policy is posted, printed, or published, including as described in this Section III, such shall include a statement that “the list is nonexhaustive, and the list may not be used to deny accommodation to a student for a holiday or festival of the student's faith or religious or spiritual belief system that does not appear on the list.”

Nothing in this Section III, and no inclusion or exclusion of a religious holiday or festival on the list posted at the school, shall preclude a student from full and reasonable accommodations for any sincerely held religious beliefs and practices with regard to all examinations or other academic requirements and absences for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system provided under this section.

IV. Prohibitions on the School. The school will not impose an academic penalty as a result of a student being absent as permitted in the policy.

V. Grievances. Should any student, parent, or guardian have any grievance regarding the implementation of this policy, the procedure will occur:

- (1) The student, parent, or guardian will make a grievance orally or in writing, as desired by the grieving party;
- (2) The student, parent, or guardian provide such grievance to the school principal and the President of the Governing Authority;
- (3) In order to provide the grievance to the President of the Governing Authority, the student, parent, or guardian may either provide via email to the email of the President as listed on the school website or share during any scheduled board meeting;
- (4) The student, parent, or guardian will provide as much detail as possible for such grievance to be investigated. Such information should include, at minimum, the first and last name of the student, the grade level of the student, the date of the alleged violation, the name of the alleged violating person, and a description of the violation; and

(5) Should the student, parent, or guardian choose to only provide the grievance to the school principal, the school principal will immediately provide notice of the grievance and content of the grievance to the President of the Governing Authority.

VI. Absences Under this Policy. Any days excused under Ohio Revised Code Section 3320.04 will not be considered in determining absence hours for the purposes of parental notification under Ohio Revised Code Section 3321.191(C)(1).