

CHAPTER 2.00 – SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AND CONSENT DECREE AND ORDER 2.75*

- I. The Santa Rosa County School Board recognizes that employees and students have the right to freely practice their religion and engage in religious activities on their own time outside of school activities and functions. In order to assure the religious freedom of all, the Board cannot sponsor, financially support, or be actively involved in religious activities. It must remain neutral on issues of religion, although it must, if possible, accommodate the religious practices and beliefs of all employees and students.
- II. This policy of neutrality on religion should not be perceived as conveying a message of endorsement or disapproval of any or all religions or religious organizations, or of those holding no religious beliefs.
- III. In keeping with this policy of neutrality, Board employees cannot, in their official Board capacities:
 - A. Encourage or discourage student participation in religious activities, clubs, education, or services;
 - B. Advance or disparage any religion or religious belief; or
 - C. Grant or deny any grade, honor, or other recognition based upon a student's religious preference or lack of it.
- IV. Because of their special relationship to their students, school administrators and teachers must at all times be mindful of their roles and not use their position to advance or disparage any religion or religious belief. School facilities and property may not be used in any manner which would be perceived as endorsement or disapproval by the Board of any religion or religious belief.
- V. No form of religious or non-religious expression may include any activity that is unlawful or that materially and substantially interferes with the orderly conduct of educational activities of the school.
- VI. The School District shall adhere to the provisions of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and to the "No Aid" provision of the Florida Constitution.
- VII. The District shall comply with the provisions of the Consent Decree and Order dated May 6, 2009 from the United States District Court for

the Northern District of Florida, Pensacola Division. Compliance shall be as construed by the District Court.

- VIII. No implementation of this policy shall affect the rights afforded by the Equal Access Act.
- IX. The Consent Decree and Order is incorporated by reference and is made part of this rule. A copy of the order shall be in all School Board Policy manuals including online editions.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 230.23 (17); 230.23005;
1001.41; 1001.42; F.S.

LAWS(S) IMPLEMENTED: U.S. CONST., amend. I; The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VII") 703(a)(1), as amended by The Civil Rights Act of 1991, 42 USC 2000e(a)(1); 761.03, Fla. Stat.; 29 C.F.R. 1605 1001.43, 1012.23 F.S.; 20 USC 4071

HISTORY: ADOPTED: 11/17/2009
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