

Regulation 0520-R(1): Religion and Education

Original Adopted Date: 03/21/2024

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

Implementation

1. The Administration will periodically review with teachers and staff Policy 0520: Religion and Education (the "Policy") and this regulation. This review will stress the Board's expectation that School personnel will recognize, protect, and accommodate religious belief and individual rights of conscience in the operation of the School, while fostering mutual understanding and respect for all individuals and beliefs.
2. The Board encourages teachers and employees at the School to discuss, equitably and with civility, and, if possible, resolve with students, parents, and guardians, any concerns regarding curricular content, activities, or student participation.
3. Students, parents, and legal guardians will be provided with a copy of the policy and this regulation annually through the posting of the policy and regulation on the School's website.
4. A student or parent or legal guardian of a student may make a complaint to the Administration that a portion of the curriculum, a School activity, or the conduct of a School employee violates state or federal law insofar as it "endorse[s], promote[s], or disparage[s] a particular religious, denominational, sectarian, agnostic, or atheistic belief or viewpoint." See Utah Code § 53G-10-202(4). All such complaints must be in writing.
5. The Chief Administrative Officer may discuss annually with the Board any requests for accommodation, or complaints about religion in the curriculum, made within the last year in order to determine how the School can more effectively recognize, protect, and accommodate religious belief and individual rights of conscience in the operation of the School. In discussing these matters with the Board, the Chief Administrative Officer will take care to protect the privacy rights of those who made complaints or requests. The Chief Administrative Officer may also submit the written record of each complaint received and any decisions made regarding such complaints to the Board President.

Waivers of Participation

1. When a student refrains from participating in any aspect of school that violates the student's or the student's parent or guardian's religious belief or right of conscience, the School:
 - a. Shall promptly notify the student's parent or guardian;
 - b. May offer an alternative that does not violate the student's or the student's parent or guardian's religious belief or right of conscience; and
 - c. May not require the student or the student's parent to explain, defend, or justify the student's or the student's parent or guardian's religious belief or right of conscience.

2. In addition, if a student refrains from a portion of a course or to a course in its entirety under Utah Code § 53G-10-205, the parent and School may work together to establish an alternate academic accommodation, which allows the student to demonstrate mastery of Core Standards or alternate standard, consistent with Utah Code § 53G-6-803(7) and Utah Code § 53G-10-205(2)(b).

3. When a student's parent or guardian waives the student's participation in any aspect of school that the parent or guardian feels would violate the student's or the student's parent or guardian's religious belief or right of conscience, the parent or guardian shall communicate that waiver (preferably in writing) as soon as possible to the Administration so that an appropriate alternative for the student can be considered.

4. The School will keep a written record of every waiver of participation based on religious belief or right of conscience.

Complaints Alleging Violation of Law

If a complaint is made by a minor student, the Administration will give written notice to the student's parent or legal guardian by email to the parent or legal guardian's last known email address.

A member of the Administration, the student, the student's parent or legal guardian, and the teacher or employee responsible for the program in question will meet to discuss a complaint, and the Administration will arrive at a decision, consistent with state and federal law, whether to alter the curriculum or activity, substitute another activity, or deny that the curriculum or activity is in violation of law. The Administration will give a written decision as soon as practical under the circumstances.

The School will keep, for a reasonable time, a written record of every complaint and any decisions made regarding each complaint.

Appeals Process

A student, parent, or legal guardian who is dissatisfied with the Administration's decision regarding complaints about curricula and activities perceived to be in violation of law, may appeal that decision within ten (10) days to the Board President.

The Board President will review the complaint of the student, parent, or legal guardian and the decision of the Administration and may modify said decision. At the sole discretion of the Board President, a committee of his or her choosing may be formed to review the complaint and the decision of the Administration. If the Board President decides to form a committee to consider the appeal, the student and student's parent or guardian will be notified.

The Board President will keep, for a reasonable time, a written record of every appeal and any decisions made regarding each appeal.

The decision of the Board President will be final.