



Boulder Valley School District
File: IGAC-R
Adopted: August 1977
Revised: July 10, 1986

TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION (And Religion in the Schools)

Teachers who work with children to perform school programs involving religious content, ceremony, or celebration (*i.e.*, references to deities, sacred writing, music, and art) as an extension of classroom learning experiences will meet with their building principal at the outset of the academic year. The purpose of this meeting is to place such school programs in appropriate instructional context and to establish a mutual dialogue for selecting, planning, and designing these programs.

A minimum of five weeks prior to the presentation of any school-sponsored program with religious content ("programs" are defined as a performance or presentation to/for others, other classes, schools, parents, patrons), the teacher(s) must submit to the building principal a written instructional plan for the program, sufficient in detail to allow the principal to determine compliance with District policies. The principal must review the plan for compliance to the following criteria established in Board Policy IGAC:

All school programs shall serve an educational or cultural purpose. They are to be simply staged and costumed. Time spent in preparation shall be in proportion to educational value. Official school assemblies and graduation exercises involving the direct participation of non-students must be justified on the basis of independent educational merit. Non-students in such events must not be invited for the purpose of presenting their religious commitments. Official public school groups will not perform at events of religious worship. Public performances of music and the arts which include religious content should do so on the independent educational merits of the inclusion and should seek to give exposure to many cultures and religious expressions.

The teacher and principal are mutually responsible for effective communication throughout the process or preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the program. Within five working days of the receipt of the proposed program, the principal will respond to the teacher in writing:

1. Indicating approval of the proposed program.

2. Identifying areas of non-compliance with Policy IGAC which need to be addressed by the teacher(s) and principal.

Once agreement is reached on the program, any further changes will require review of the total program by the building principal.

Building principals and teacher(s) are encouraged to consider involvement of their assigned program development specialist who will coordinate the involvement of other appropriate building or District personnel.

If an agreement is not reached in regard to a program, the principal will request that a District review committee be formed. Upon receipt of a request from a building principal, the appropriate executive level director will convene a District review committee within five working days. The District review committee will consist of:

1. The appropriate level director (chairperson).
2. The building teacher(s) directly involved in the request. The teacher(s) has the option of requesting two additional teachers representing the content area(s).
3. The building principal.
4. The assigned program development specialist.
5. The Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services.

This District review committee may be assisted by the attorney for the School District or other appropriate personnel.

This committee will review the instructional plan for the proposed program and the principal's decision in an expeditious fashion to determine compliance with applicable Board of Education policies. If the District review committee concurs with the principal's decision, the teacher(s) may request immediate consideration by the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent will consider the request and advise all affected parties regarding further disposition of the proposed program at the earliest practicable time.

After the Superintendent's response, the matter may be heard by the Board of Education upon the written request of any party of interest.

End of File: IGAC-R