

## Series 6000 – Instruction

### 1. Elementary and Secondary

#### A. Schedules

#### (5) Ceremonies and Observances

##### Silent Meditation

The Board directs that the administration shall provide for students and teachers the opportunity to observe an appropriate period of time each day for silent meditation.

##### Salute to the Flag

Each school within the Suffield Public School System shall provide time each day for students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. If, because of some personal philosophy or belief, a student has made the personal, serious decision not to salute the flag, he/she may choose to remain seated and silent. In any event, all students must be courteous and respectful of the beliefs of others.

##### Separation of Church and State

In accordance with the mandate of the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the establishment of religion, it is the policy of this Board that the public schools will, at all times and in all ways, be neutral in matters of religion.

This requirement of neutrality need not preclude nor hinder the public schools in fulfilling their responsibility to educate students to be tolerant and respectful of religious diversity. The district also recognizes that one of its educational responsibilities is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.

Therefore, the district will approach religion from an objective, curriculum-related perspective, encouraging all students and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other's religious and/or non-religious views. In that spirit of respect, students and staff members should be excused from participating in activities that are contrary to religious beliefs unless there are clear issues of compelling public interest that would prevent it.

##### Absence for Religious Observation

Student absences for religious observances shall be excused. Furthermore, such absences should not prohibit receipt of attendance related awards nor impact student grades or participation in school events.

(cf. 6141.2 – Separation of Church and State)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-16a Silent meditation  
10-230 Flags for schoolrooms and schools

Policy adopted: November 6, 2002  
Policy revised: February 27, 2007  
Policy reviewed: July 18, 2012

SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Suffield, Connecticut