

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **6000**
CATEGORY: **Instruction**
POLICY CODE: **6115/School Ceremonies
and Observances**

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

Policy Statement

It is the policy of this Board that the Trumbull Public Schools shall, at all times and in all ways, be neutral in matters of religion. This means that the Trumbull Public Schools:

- shall assume no role or responsibility for the religious training of any student; and
- shall not purposely become involved in the religious belief, disbelief, or doubt of any student.

This requirement of neutrality need not preclude or hinder the Trumbull 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.

Adopted: 1/4/1983
Revised: 7/18/1989, 8/21/2001,
2/25/2014, 2/28/2017

References

- Connecticut General Statutes §§ 10-16a, 10-230, 52-571b
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6131: Guest Speakers

Regulations

I. Religion in Curriculum, Instruction, and Other Programs

Since religious institutions and diverse beliefs have been a force in shaping human experience, past and present, awareness of these significant forces is part of a complete education. It is essential that the teaching about – not of – religion be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner.

Therefore, the practice of the Trumbull Public Schools will be to:

1. emphasize that religious themes in the arts, literature, and history, both in curriculum and school activities, be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of these areas. The curriculum should address a diversity of religions, using materials reflecting secular educational values. Studies should never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious or non-religious beliefs;
2. provide a process for students to be excused from this instruction if their parents desire. A student who is excused should be given reasonable alternative accommodations and materials to work on that are of educational benefit. To the degree possible, alternative studies should deal with the subject of pluralism and diversity. The curriculum, however, should be such as to minimize the need for such requests; and
3. provide programs that focus on seasonal themes rather than religious themes, inclusive of concerts, enrichment programs, and fundraising sales.

II. Religious Holidays

Religious holidays provide a natural opportunity to promote an appreciation for and respect of diversity. Therefore, it will further be the practice of the Trumbull Public Schools to:

1. ensure that recognition of religious holidays will not dominate the educational program and must support curricular objectives; and
2. ensure that parents may exclude their children from programs involving the recognition of religious holidays or a celebration that is in conflict with family beliefs. A written request for exclusion should be sent to the building administrator.

III. School Day Opening Exercises

Each school shall set aside daily time for exercises which include the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, followed by a moment of silence.

1. The principal of each school shall be responsible for the administration of this regulation.
2. Participation in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance is voluntary.
3. Each person shall utilize the moment of silence according to his or her own personal and private decision.