

EXEMPTION OF STUDENTS FROM INSTRUCTION

Policy Statement

The Trumbull Board of Education recognizes that some curriculum may involve controversial issues, and that such content may offend the ideological or religious sensibilities of some members of the community. The curriculum shall address such controversial topics in an impartial and objective manner.

The District has established procedures for the exemption of students from instruction:

- in areas dealing with religious themes;
- in physical education;
- in the specific curricular areas of Dissection Instruction, Family Life Instruction, and HIV/AIDS Instruction; and
- in the District's sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program.

Substance abuse education is required by state statutes for all students annually; students may not be exempted from instruction in this area.

Adopted: 3/16/1993
Revised: 6/10/1993, 8/2/2005,
7/11/2017

References

- Connecticut General Statutes §§ 10-16b, 10-16c, 10-16e, 10-18d, 10-19(a), 10-19(b), 17a-101q
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5145.511: Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6115: School Ceremonies and Observances
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6121: Non-Discrimination in Instruction/Classroom
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6141.4: Responsible Use of Animals in the Classroom

Regulations

I. Exemption of Students from Instruction in Areas Dealing with Religious Themes

- A. If the religious beliefs and/or teachings of a student and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) are contrary to the content of a school subject, or to any part of a school activity, the student may be exempt from participation. To receive such an exemption, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must present a written request to the school principal stating the conflict involved.
- B. A student receiving from the school principal an exemption from such instruction will be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment, such alternative assignment designed to achieve, to the extent possible, the goals and objectives of the relevant curricular area. An exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.

II. Exemption of Students from Instruction in Physical Education

- A. If a student is unable to participate in a physical education class, he/she must present to the school principal or his/her designee a statement from a physician stating the reason for his/her inability to participate.
- B. A student receiving an exemption from such instruction will be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment, such alternative assignment designed to achieve, to the extent possible, the goals and objectives of the relevant curricular area. An exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.

III. Exemption of Students from Dissection Instruction

- A. “Dissection Instruction” is defined as instruction in which a student must participate in, or observe, the dissection of any animal. A student will be exempted from Dissection Instruction upon receipt by the school principal of a written request from the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) for the exemption.
- B. A student receiving from the school principal an exemption from such instruction will be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment, such alternative assignment designed to achieve, to the extent possible, the goals and objectives of the relevant curricular area. An exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.

IV. Exemption of Students from Family Life Instruction

- A. “Family Life Instruction” is defined as instruction pertaining to family planning, human sexuality, parenting, nutrition, and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic, and social aspects of family life. A student will be exempted from Family Life Instruction, in its entirety or any portion thereof, upon receipt by the school principal of a written request from the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) for the exemption.

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- B. A student receiving from the school principal an exemption from such instruction will be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment, such alternative assignment designed to achieve, to the extent possible, the goals and objectives of the relevant curricular area. An exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.

V. Exemption of Students from HIV/AIDS Instruction

- A. “HIV/AIDS Instruction” is defined as ongoing and systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) offered by the district pursuant to state law. Currently there is no cure for those infected with AIDS, but the Board of Education believes that education is the best way to prevent the spread of AIDS. By learning the facts about AIDS, students will be able to make decisions that will keep them healthy and perhaps save their lives. A student will be exempted from HIV/AIDS Instruction upon receipt by the school principal of a written request from the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) for the exemption.
- B. A student receiving from the school principal an exemption from such instruction will be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment, such alternative assignment designed to achieve, to the extent possible, the goals and objectives of the relevant curricular area. An exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.

VI. Exemption of Students from the District’s Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program

- A. A student shall be excused from participating in the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program offered in the District, in its entirety or any part thereof, by written notification by the student’s parent or legal guardian to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments, who shall notify the appropriate school principal.
- B. A student receiving an exemption from the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program shall be provided, during the period of time in which the student would otherwise be participating in such program, an opportunity for other study or academic work. An exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.