HEWLETT-WOODMERE UFSD **Policy # 4821.1**

( ) Required
(X) Local
(X) Notice

INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHOOL DAYS OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

The Board of Education recognizes there are school days of religious observance which require the school system both to guarantee freedom to meet religious obligations for those students who stay home and to offer regular uninterrupted instruction to those who attend school.

Therefore, work will continue in classes and students who are absent will be required to make up the work missed. Teachers will provide opportunity and assistance, within the spirit of this policy, so that students can make up this work.

A. Guidelines

1. Every school day is a day of regular instruction. If school is open, the instructional program will continue without interruption. The implementation of this policy requires that regular uninterrupted work be provided for students attending school on days of religious observance, while the opportunity and assistance are provided to each absent student for meeting his/her obligation to make up the work missed upon her/his return to school.
2. The principal's understanding and effective leadership is essential to guarantee the proper implementation of the policy. The principal should establish an atmosphere within which each teacher understands and accepts the principles and philosophy of the policy.
3. In the classroom, attention should not be drawn to the approach of a holiday unless it is the subject of study related to the course content.
4. Teachers must be given every assistance in the creative application of these guidelines to meaningful classroom practices.
    a. Teaching plans for these days must grow out of the regular programs of instruction and should be geared to a variety of possible instructional circumstances.
    b. The next day's work should not be simple repetition of the lesson presented on a day of excessive absences. Careful planning will keep to a minimum the difficulties encountered in carrying out the policy.
5. Teachers may be drawn into conversations concerning various aspects of this policy. If so, they should not make any statements in class or to individual students which judge, or which attempt to influence, the manner in which a pupil or his/her family should interpret a religious obligation.

6. Actions which may make a child feel that she/he must come to school or that he/she must stay at home should be avoided. These include teacher comments as to the appropriateness of any mode of student observance of the holiday, polling the students to find out who and how many will be absent (or present), and automatically presenting advanced assignments to cover the day(s) when absence is expected.
    a. Giving advance assignments may be interpreted as encouraging students to stay out of school or as putting pressure on students who will remain home to complete homework assignments on days when religious obligation might preclude such activity.

7. Parents and Staff members should refer to the list of excusable days for religious observance provided by the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching, Learning and Technology.

B. Missed Work Procedures

1. Parents and students should know in advance that make-up of work missed is required after any absence.
2. Make up of work missed should be scheduled to avoid undue pressure of homework on the day or two following a student's return to school.
3. These procedures should be set forth in writing and distributed by the principal to each teacher and each student, each year.

C. Operating School on the Day of Religious Observance

1. Continue with regular instruction.
2. Do not combine classes unless this procedure is part of the regular instruction.
3. Hire substitutes as needed.
4. Examinations and other similar major evaluative activities will not be scheduled on these days, when possible.

Legal Reference:
State Education Law 3204, 3210, 3602, 3604

Policy
Adopted:
11/20/24

Legal Reference:
1) Bulletin to the schools, State Education Department, December 15, 1963
2) Education Law: Sections 3204, 3210, 36002, 3604