



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

Board Policy Statement

6144.10 - Exemptions from Instruction and School Activities

Approved on May 2, 2016 | Revised on October 4, 2021

The following policy outlines areas where students may be exempt from participation in school activities or instruction and the reasons for permissible exemption. Despite the following exemptions substance abuse education is required by state statutes for all students annually and students are not exempt.

I. Religious

If the religious beliefs of a student or their parents or guardian include a prohibition of a particular activity or topic that may be part of coursework or curriculum, the student or their guardian may request a reasonable accommodation from the district. Such request shall be made in accordance with the administrative regulations of this policy.

II. HIV/AIDS Instruction

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) upon receipt of a written request for exemption from their parent or guardian.

"HIV/AIDS Instruction" is defined as ongoing and systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) offered by the District pursuant to state law.

III. Dissection of Animals

A student will be exempted from Dissection Instruction upon receipt of a written request for exemption from their parent or guardian. "Dissection Instruction" is defined as instruction in which a student must participate in, or observe the dissection of any animal.

Any student excused from participating in, or observing the dissection of any animal as part of classroom instruction shall be required to complete an alternate assignment to be determined by the teacher.

Exemptions from required instruction do not excuse a student from the total semester hours required for graduation.

IV. Family Life and Education Instruction

Students, parents or guardians shall be informed of their right to exempt the student from the family life program. The student will be exempted upon a written request for exemption from their parent or guardian. "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.

V. Patriotic Activities

Each school shall provide the opportunity to students and school staff to recite the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of each day.

The Board respects the freedom of speech, or non-speech provided to all citizens. During Patriotic Activities, such as the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, the performance of Patriotic Songs or the National Anthem, or other such activities, any student may exercise their right to not participate and may, instead, stand or sit silently as they choose.

Staff will ensure that all students behave in a mutually respectful manner and that no student is harassed, insulted, or demeaned for their decision to either participate or not participate in any such activity.

VI. Silent Meditation

The Board of Education, in recognition of the diverse beliefs and cultures of students and families in our community, direct schools to provide those students who wish to do so the opportunity to silently meditate at the start of each school day. All teachers and students shall be provided this opportunity in conjunction with the opening activities of the school day.

Any student who does not wish to participate in silent meditation shall not disrupt those who are participating and are expected to remain in the classroom for the designated time.

VII. Other State Exemptions

The procedure for requesting an exemption, outlined in the administrative regulations of this policy, shall also be utilized by families and students for any other areas to which a state exemption is available.



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

Administrative Procedure

6144.10 – Exemptions from Instruction and School Activities

Approved on October 12, 2021

I. Purpose

The purpose of these administrative procedures is to establish procedures for parents/guardians and eligible students to request an exemption from instruction and school activities under certain circumstances. The Consolidated School District of New Britain (the “District”) respects the rights of parents/guardians to have their child(ren) excused from specific instruction pursuant to Board of Education Policy 6114.10.

II. Procedures

A school Principal shall excuse any student from specific instruction upon written request from the student’s parent/guardian or eligible student pursuant to Board of Education Policy 6114.10, under the following conditions:

1. The request must be submitted by the student’s parent/guardian or eligible student, must be in writing, and must detail the specific instruction from which the student is to be excused.
2. For requests based upon religious beliefs, the written request must contain a statement that the specific instruction described conflicts with the religious beliefs of the student or the parent/guardian.
3. The written request for curricular exemption must be sent to the school’s Principal prior to the planned instruction.
4. A written request for exemption must be completed annually and is only valid for the school year in which it was submitted.

One (1) copy of the request shall be retained in the student's permanent school records, one (1) copy kept by the school Principal, and one (1) copy submitted to the teacher from whose instruction the student is to be excused.

III. Alternative Assignments

1. Any student excused from participating in, or observing, the dissection of any animal as part of classroom instruction shall be required to complete an alternate assignment to be determined by the teacher.

2. Any student excused from participating in 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 as determined by the teacher.
3. Any student excused from any other aspect of the curriculum may be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment as determined by the teacher.

III. Responsibilities

1. Students

For exemption requests based on religious beliefs for students in Grades K-6, the District and its employees shall ensure that students exercise their right to be excused from specific objected instruction in accordance with a parental request and valid exemption. For exemption requests based on religious beliefs for students in Grades 7-12, it shall be the responsibility of the student to exercise their right to be excused and request permission to leave class in accordance with a parental request and valid exemption when the specific instruction objected to is presented.

All students excused from specific instruction pursuant to Board Policy 6144.10 and these Administrative Procedures shall be required to achieve the academic standards established by the District as necessary for graduation.

2. Teacher

A classroom teacher shall excuse the student from instruction if the teacher or principal has a copy of the written request and the written request adequately describes the specific instruction.

3. Principal

The Principal shall determine where the student shall report during the time the student is excused from instruction.

The Principal may seek assistance through the Department of Academics in development of an alternative means for achieving the learning outcomes necessary for graduation.

THE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

Exemptions from Instruction and School Activities Request Form

I request that my child be exempted from instruction in the following areas:

Check all that apply:

1. Dissection _____
2. Family life education _____
3. HIV/AIDS _____
4. Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program _____

IF REQUESTING A RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION:

Please detail the specific instruction and/or school activities from which you are requesting an exemption:

Check at least one:

The above instruction and/or school activity would be contrary to ☐ student's ☐ parent's ☐ guardian's religious beliefs.

I understand that for exemption requests based on religious beliefs for students in Grades K-6, the District and its employees shall ensure that students exercise their right to be excused from specific objected instruction in accordance with a parental request and valid exemption. For exemption requests based on religious beliefs for students in Grades 7-12, it shall be the responsibility of the student to exercise their right to be excused and request permission to leave class in accordance with a parental request and valid exemption when the specific instruction objected to is presented.

I recognize that teachers may require my child to complete alternative assignments in lieu of the curricular instruction planned in the area of exemption.

This form must be completed annually and returned to the school principal by prior to the planned instruction.

Name of Student (Please Print)

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

Or

Student's Signature (if 18 years of age)

Date