

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 7.40 PATRIOTIC EXERCISES

(1) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(a) State statutes provide that “Every public school shall offer the Pledge of Allegiance or the national anthem in grades one to 12 each school day.”

(b) In keeping with this, students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag. Students refraining from such participation have the responsibility to respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate in the ceremony. If students choose not to participate, they shall not have to explain their reasons for refusing to recite the pledge, but they should remain silent during the rendering of the salute or pledge. They may decline to participate in the salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance without securing permission from their parents.

(c) In high schools, the Pledge of Allegiance should be offered at least one day per week.

(2) NATIONAL ANTHEMS OF OTHER COUNTRIES

(a) Whenever the national anthem of another country or of any racial or ethnic group is played or sung in a school assembly program, the National Anthem of the United States, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, is to be played or sung first.

(b) The audience shall be asked to rise and remain standing for both anthems.

(3) DISPLAY OF THE U.S. FLAG

(a) The flag of the United States should be displayed in accordance with Title 36, Chapter 10, of the United States Code. A copy of that document shall be in the possession of each building administrator.

(b) As a symbol of the nation, the flag is entitled to the highest degree of respect in each school. While schools cannot legally compel persons to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, honor the flag, or engage in any ceremony that would violate their conscience, schools should do nothing to encourage disrespect.

(c) National or ethnic flags may be displayed in the schools. Their purpose is to foster pride and understanding of one’s heritage. The display of such flags is encouraged subject to the following limitations:

1. National or ethnic flags may not be used in a manner which would create the impression that they are an alternative to the United States flag.
2. National and ethnic flags should not be displayed in a manner that would create the impression of granting more favorable treatment of one flag over others.
3. Where disputes exist involving the display of national and ethnic flags, disputes should be decided locally, by the school leader and/or their designee, who will consult with their regional superintendent/instructional leadership director (i.e. immediate supervisor) to ensure decisions do not violate other elements of this policy.

(d) Nothing in this document is intended to limit the use of flags for instructional purposes.

History: Adopted 11-6-74; reaffirmed 6-30-75; revised 5-26-82, 8-22-83, 6-26-91; reaffirmed 2-22-95. Revised 01-30-25

Previous Coding: Admin. Policy INDA, INDA-R, INDB prior to May 1995; Admin. Policy 9.40, May 1995-August 1996

Legal Ref.: W.S. 118.06

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