

Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES Policy
Series 7000 – Instruction
Policy #7180 – RELIGIOUS CONTENT OF AWARDS CEREMONIES AND HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

The BOCES remains impartial with regard to religion and seeks neither to advance nor inhibit religion. Students, faculty and administration are reminded of the pluralism of religious beliefs and are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivity of others.

Commemoration of special days and events shall emphasize cultural, historical, and artistic values rather than specific religious content. Such programs shall respect the variety of religious affiliations and beliefs existing within the community and shall honor Constitutional requirements.

The BOCES recognizes that activities related to the celebration of religious holidays and events may present an excellent opportunity to teach about religion and foster respect and understanding among students. School activities related to the teaching of cultural and religious traditions should have a secular purpose and must be consistent with and representative of the BOCES curriculum. In addition, educational goals motivated by secular purposes cannot always filter out religious aspects, and sometimes requires the presentation of material with religious themes. Therefore, activities related to the observance of religious holidays will be permitted to the extent that they foster appropriate educational goals and are conducted in an unbiased and objective manner, focusing on the origins of the holiday, its history, and the generally agreed upon meaning of the holiday observance.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participation in those parts of an activity or program involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs or that of their parent(s)/legal guardian(s). Alternative activities may be provided that are of instructional value.

Education Law Section 3204(5)

Adopted: 7/13/1999
Revised: 6/16/2010
Reviewed: 10/17/2012
Reviewed: 10/21/2015
Reviewed: 9/19/2018
Reviewed: 9/15/2021
Reviewed: 9/18/2024