



Policy Number: 1080

Dated: 04/28/2016

POLICY RECOGNIZING CONSTITUTIONAL FREEDOM IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PURPOSE

American Leadership Academy recognizes that the Constitution of Utah prohibits the use of the powers of government to encourage or discourage religious beliefs or practices, or to repress rights of conscience. Given their unique relationship to children attending the public schools, school officials must be particularly careful to remain neutral in matters relating to religion, while striving to accommodate the religious beliefs and practices and the freedom of conscience of students and their parents.

CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM

American Leadership Academy may undertake any instructional activity, performance or display which includes examination of or presentations about religion, political or religious thought or expression, or the influence thereof on music, art, literature, law, politics, history or any other element of the curriculum, including the comparative study of religions, provided it is designed to achieve secular educational objectives included within the context of a course or activity and conducted in accordance with applicable rules of the school.

No aspect of cultural heritage, political theory, moral theory, or societal value shall be either included within or excluded from school curricula for the primary reason that it affirms, ignores, or denies religious belief, religious doctrine, a religious sect, or the existence of a spiritual realm or Supreme Being.

EXPRESSIONS OF PERSONAL BELIEF BY EMPLOYEES

American Leadership Academy officials and employees may not use their positions to endorse, promote, or disparage a particular religious, denominational, sectarian, agnostic, or atheistic belief or viewpoint. Employees may, by exercising due caution, explain or define personal religious beliefs or perspectives, or opinions about the rightfulness or wrongfulness of his/her own, or any other person's religious beliefs, practices or lack thereof.

STUDENT EXPRESSION

A student participating in a classroom discussion, presentation, or assignment, or in a school sponsored activity, shall not be prohibited from expressing personal beliefs of any kind nor be penalized for so doing, unless the conduct:

1. Unreasonably interferes with order or discipline.
2. Threatens the well-being of persons or property.
3. Violates concepts of civility or propriety appropriate in a school setting.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES AND CHURCH-OWNED FACILITIES

Public employees may neither authorize nor encourage prayer or devotional activities in connection with any class.

No school employee or student may be required to attend or participate in any religious service, whether in an individual capacity or as a member of a performing group. No penalty may be assessed for failure to attend or perform in such an activity.

Students may be required to visit church-owned facilities when religious services are not being conducted if the visit is intended solely for the purpose of pursuing permissible educational objectives such as those relating to art, music, or history.

REQUESTS FOR WAIVER OF PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

If a parent with legal custody or other legal guardian of a student, or if a secondary student, determines that the student's participation in a portion of the curriculum or in an activity would require the student to affirm or deny a religious belief or right of conscience or engage or refrain from engaging in a practice forbidden or required in the exercise of a religious right or right of conscience, the parent/guardian or secondary student may request either (1) a waiver of the requirement to participate or (2) a reasonable alternative that requires reasonably equivalent performance by the student of the secular objectives of the curriculum or activity in question.

Utah Code R277-105

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF PARTICIPATION

A parent, legal guardian, or secondary student may request a Waiver of Participation by presenting this document to the principal.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Street City State Zip

PHONE NUMBER: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Activity to be waived: _____

Reason for Request: _____

Waived: _____

Alternative Curriculum: _____

Principal's Signature

Date