

Sample Board Policy: Religious Expression

Implementing Iowa Code section 279.89 (as enacted by Senate File 2231)

Note: This sample policy is offered as a courtesy for consideration of boards governing school districts and public charter schools. This sample policy is not required; however, a policy meeting the requirement of Senate File 2231 is required.

I. Leadership and Staff Notification

It is the policy of [INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL NAME HERE] that the [superintendent of the school district/principal of the charter school] shall annually distribute the most recent version of the "[Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression](#)" produced by the U.S. Department of Education, and distributed by the Iowa Department of Education, to each [*for school districts:* board member, principal, and teacher (including making available to substitute and student teachers)]/*for charter schools:* governing board member and teacher (including making available to substitute teachers and student teachers)]. [A principal of a charter school is required to distribute the guidance to each member of the governing board and teacher of the charter school.] [Optional: The school district's board of directors may add additional job classifications and categories to receive this notice.]

II. Constitutionally Protected Prayer

It is the policy of [INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL NAME HERE] to allow students and staff to engage in constitutionally protected prayer within the district schools consistent with applicable statutory or case law pertaining to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Accordingly, no board policy will prevent, or otherwise deny participation in, constitutionally protected prayer in district schools, consistent with federal law.

III. Grading Standards

It is the policy of [INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL NAME HERE] that religious content in student assignments will be evaluated using the same academic grading standards applied to secular work.

IV. Student Organizations

It is the policy of [INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL NAME HERE] that religious student organizations have the same rights, access to facilities, and institutional support as secular student clubs.

V. Professional Development

It is the policy of [INSERT SCHOOL DISTRICT/CHARTER SCHOOL NAME HERE] to offer professional development opportunities to each employee of the school district or charter school regarding constitutionally protected prayer and religious expression in public elementary and secondary schools.

VI. Concerns

Concerns may be directed to the district civil rights coordinator.