

## **RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS**

In accordance with the mandate of the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the establishment of religion it is the policy of this board that the Waynesboro Public Schools will, at all times and in all ways, be neutral in matters of religion. This means that the Waynesboro Public Schools:

- will assume no role or responsibility for the religious training of any student; and
- will in no way become involved in the religious belief, disbelief or doubt of any student.

This requirement of neutrality need not preclude nor hinder the Waynesboro Public Schools in fulfilling their responsibility to educate students to be tolerant and respectful of religious diversity. The division also recognizes that one of its educational responsibilities is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.

Therefore, the division will approach from an objective, curriculum-related perspective, encouraging all students and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other's religious and/or non-religious views. In that spirit of respect, students and staff members should be excused from participating in activities that are contrary to their religious beliefs unless there are clear issues of compelling public interest that would prevent it.

Adopted: April 11, 1995

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Legal Ref.: Constitution of the United States (1st. Amendment)

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Section 22.1-78