

EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to comply with the requirement of the State Board of Education that school districts adopt policies that assure parents the right to have their children excused from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs.

School districts shall adopt policies to assure that parents have the right to have their children excused from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs.

The rights granted by this policy are granted to parents of students enrolled in this district where the students are under the age of eighteen (18) and to the students themselves when the student is eighteen (18) or over, unless the student is incapable of making the decision due to a disability.

As used in this policy, the phrase "specific instruction" means identifiable elements of instruction by the teacher. It does not include required reading or learning outcomes.

The district shall excuse any student from specific instruction as defined in this policy upon satisfaction of and subject to the following conditions:

1. To assist the school district in ensuring that the student is excused from the correct specific instruction, the request must be made in writing and must detail the specific instruction with respect to which the student is to be excused.
2. The written request to be excused shall be sent by the qualifying parent or student to the classroom teacher, who will forward copies to the building principal, and assistant superintendent. One copy shall be retained in the student's permanent school records, a copy shall be kept by the school principal, and an approved copy shall be returned to the teacher from whose instruction the student is to be excused.
3. It shall not be the responsibility of the district or any of its officials to ensure that the child exercises his/her right to be excused and school employees are prohibited from initiating action to have any student leave class in accordance with a parental request. Instead, it is the responsibility of the student to request permission to leave class when the specific instruction objected to is being presented or is about to be presented. When the child seeks to be excused, the teacher is to excuse the child if (a) the teacher has a copy of the approved written request or, if upon checking with the principal, the principal has a copy of the approved written request; and (b) the written request adequately describes the instruction that is taking place or about to take place.

4. The written request must contain a statement that the specific instruction described in the written request conflicts with the religious beliefs of the student or of the parents.
5. The parent and/or student shall designate on the request to be excused replacement educational activities in which the student shall engage during the time the student is excused. The only permissible educational activity for this purpose shall be in the nature of replacement instruction that is consistent with the goals set for the course and that does not require the provision of any extra resources by the district.
6. The building principal shall determine where the student shall report during the time the student is excused.
7. All students excused from specific instruction shall be required to achieve the learning outcomes established by the district and are necessary for graduation.

This policy shall become void and unenforceable if the regulation of the State Board of Education, upon which it is based, i.e. Title 22, Sec. 5.4 (d) (3), is repealed, modified or declared invalid in whole or in part.