

Weakley County Board of Education



Monitoring:	Descriptor Term: Recognition of Religious Beliefs, Customs and Holidays	Descriptor Code: 4.803	Issued Date: 2/5/2009
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2 No religious belief or non-belief shall be promoted by the school system or its employees, and
3 none shall be belittled. All students and staff members shall be tolerant of each other's views.
4 The school system shall use its opportunity to foster understanding and mutual respect among
5 students and parents, whether it involves race, culture, economic background or religious
6 beliefs.¹ In that spirit of tolerance, students and staff members shall be excused from
7 participating in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs.

8
9 **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

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11 Observance of religious holidays² shall be as follows:

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13 1. The several holidays throughout the year which have both a religious and a secular basis may
14 be observed in the public schools;³
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16 2. The historical and contemporary values and the origin of religious holidays may be explained
17 in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination;
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19 3. Music, art, literature and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the
20 curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs if presented in a prudent and objective
21 manner and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday;
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23 4. The use of religious symbols that are part of a religious holiday are permitted as a teaching
24 aid or resource, provided such symbols are displayed as an example of the cultural and religious
25 heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature. These holidays include Christmas, Easter,
26 Passover, Hanukkah, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving, and Halloween; and
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28 5. The school district's calendar shall be prepared so as to minimize conflicts with religious
29 holidays of all faiths.
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Legal References:

- ¹ TCA 49-6-2901-2906; State BoE Guidelines – Recitation of Pledge
² *Florey v. Sioux Falls*, 619 F. 2d 1311 (1980); *Washegesic v. Bloomingdale Public Schools* 813 F. Supp. 559 (1993)
³ TCA 49-6-3016

Cross References:

- 4.802 Student Equal Access
5.600 Staff Rights & Responsibilities
6.200 Attendance