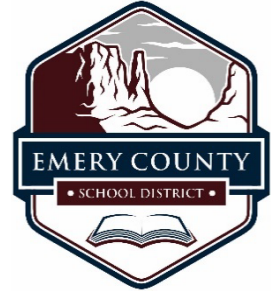


Emery County School District



Policy IHAR—Curriculum: Religious Neutrality

Date Adopted: 10 September 2025

Current Review / Revision: 10 September 2025

Constitutional Freedom in Public Schools—

Any school in the District, in accordance with State Board of Education policy, 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 consistent with Utah Code § 53G-10-206 and is designed to achieve academic educational objectives included within the context of a course or activity and conducted in accordance with applicable rules or policies of this District.

[Utah Code § 53G-10-202\(1\) \(2025\)](#)

[Utah Code § 53G-10-206 \(2024\)](#)

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.

[Utah Code § 53G-10-202\(2\) \(2025\)](#)

American history and heritage documents may not be excluded from study or censored due to their religious or cultural nature.

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-475-3\(4\) \(August 7, 2024\)](#)

Religious Neutrality—

School officials and employees may not use their positions to endorse, promote, or disparage a particular religious, denominational, sectarian, agnostic, or atheistic belief or viewpoint. District schools may not sponsor or deny the practice of prayer or religious devotionals.

[Utah Code § 53G-10-202\(3\), \(4\) \(2025\)](#)

Participation Waivers—

A student may refrain from participation in any aspect of school that violates a religious belief or right of conscience of the student. A student's parent may waive the student's participation in any aspect of school that violates the student's or the student's parent's religious belief or right of conscience. A student may not be penalized or discriminated against for refraining from participation due to the student or student's parent's religious belief or right of conscience. A student may not be required or incentivized to affirm or deny the religious belief or right of conscience of the student or the student's parent. When a student refrains from participation, the school shall promptly notify the student's parent. The school may offer an alternative that does not violate the student's or the student's parent's religious belief or right of conscience but may not require the student or student's parent to explain, defend, or justify the religious belief or right of conscience.

Expressions of Belief

Expression of personal beliefs by a student participating in school-directed curricula or activities may not be prohibited or penalized unless the expression unreasonably interferes with order or discipline, threatens the well-being of persons or property, or violates concepts of civility or propriety appropriate to the school setting. Limitations on student expression, practice, or conduct shall be by the least restrictive means necessary to satisfy the school's interests or to satisfy another specifically identified compelling governmental interest.

[Utah Code § 53G-10-203\(1\), \(3\) \(2023\)](#)

Expressions of Belief During Discretionary Time

Free expression of voluntary religious practice or freedom of speech by students during discretionary time, (non-instructional time during which a student is free to pursue personal interests), shall not be denied unless:

1. The conduct unreasonably interferes with the ability of school officials to maintain order and discipline;
2. Unreasonably endangers persons or property; or,
3. Violates concepts of civility or propriety appropriate to the school setting.

Any limitation under this section on student, expression, practice, or conduct shall be by the least restrictive means necessary to satisfy the school's interests or to satisfy another specifically identified compelling governmental interest.

[Utah Code § 53G-10-203\(2\), \(3\) \(2023\)](#)