

Religious Accommodations for Students and Employees

The District values the diverse religious beliefs of its students and employees and recognizes the positive effects that religion has in our community and in our schools. It is the District's goal to respect the religious freedom of students and employees to the fullest extent possible.

Student Accommodations

The District shall make every effort to reasonably accommodate the religious beliefs of each student. No student shall be prevented from exercising his or her religious beliefs at school unless doing so creates a material and substantial disruption to the operations of the school or invades the rights of another student.

Curricular Accommodations

In accordance with students' and parents' constitutional rights, as well as state laws and regulations, accommodation in the curriculum shall be made for a student when curriculum conflicts with the sincerely held religious beliefs of the student or his or her parent or legal guardian. For the purposes of this policy, all mandatory lessons and activities qualify as "curriculum."

It shall be the responsibility of the parents, or the student in consultation with his or her parents, to request a curricular accommodation. Such a request shall be in writing and shall specify the sincerely held religious beliefs that may conflict with content or categories of content in the curriculum. Once the District has received such a request, it shall identify any content that is reasonably understood to conflict with the requestor's beliefs and provide them with notice and an opportunity to opt out of such content.

Accommodations may include excusing the student from the assignment or class discussion which conflicts with their religious beliefs and/or providing an alternative assignment for the student. If the accommodation is so great that the student will be substantially deprived of an effective education, the Superintendent will determine how to address this.

Curriculum shall be made reasonably available for review by a student's parents within ten days of a request for such review.

Employee Accommodations

The District shall accommodate the religious beliefs of its employees unless doing so would violate the law or would otherwise impose an undue hardship on the District. To constitute an undue hardship, an accommodation must impose substantial increased costs in the overall context of District operations or otherwise substantially undermine the ability of the District to achieve its educational mission.

All student religious accommodation requests shall be submitted in writing to the building principal. Employee religious accommodation requests shall be submitted in writing to the employee's direct supervisor. Any denial of such a request by a student or an employee may be appealed, first to the Superintendent, and, if not resolved, to the School Committee.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 76:5; 151B:4

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. Â§ 2000-e *et seq.*

Mahmoud v. Taylor, 606 U.S. 522 (2025).