

Board Policy Document

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## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

### *Series 600*

**Policy Title: Religion Based Exclusion From School Program**

**Code Number: 602.12**

Parents who wish to have their student excluded from a school program because of religious beliefs must inform the Principal of the student's attendance center. The Board authorizes the administration in its discretion to allow the exclusion if it is not disruptive to the educational process and does not infringe on a compelling state or educational interest. Further, the exclusion must not interfere with other District operations.

In notifying the Principal, the parents shall abide by the following:

- The notice shall be in writing;
- The objection shall be based on religious beliefs;
- The objection shall state which activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;
- The objection shall state why these activities or studies violate their religious beliefs;
- The objection shall state a proposed alternate activity or study; and
- Sufficient notice to provide officials time to implement an alternative study program.

First Adoption: May 23, 1995

Revision Adoption: April 9, 1996/March 13, 2000/April 27, 2009

Legal Reference: U.S. Constitution amendment I.

Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602, 91 S. Ct. 2105 (1971).

Graham v. Central Community School District of Decatur County, 608 F.

Supp. 531 (Iowa 1985).

Iowa Code Chapters 256.11(7), 279.8 (1989).

281 Iowa Admin. Code 12.5(6) (*new standards*)

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The factors the Principal may consider when a student requests to be excluded from a program or activity because of religious beliefs include, but are not limited to, staff available to supervise a student who wishes to be excluded, space to house the student while the student is excluded, available Principal-approved alternative course of study or activity while the student is excluded, number of students who wish to be excluded, whether allowing the exclusion places the school in a position that it is supporting a particular religion, and whether the program or activity is required for promotion to the next grade level for graduation.

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