

Category O

The Board understands that administration and staff must recognize students' First Amendment religious rights, subject to reasonable rules and regulations. The Board further recognizes that the United States Constitution's First Amendment imposes two equally important obligations on public schools.

First, schools must not forbid students acting on their own from expressing their personal religious views or beliefs. Second, schools may not endorse religious activity or doctrine and students may not coerce participation in religious activity.

The Board will act to give students the same rights to engage in religious activity and discussion as they have to engage in other comparable activity. Generally, this means that students may pray in a non-disruptive manner during the school day when they are not engaged in school activity and instruction, subject to the same rules as apply to other speech.

Legal References:

New Hampshire Constitution, Part I, Art. 5
20 U.S.C. 7904 (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)
RSA 189:1-b, Freedom of Assembly, Freedom of Religion

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