

POLICY

2013

8360

Instruction

SUBJECT: HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

Religious Holidays

It is the intent of the Vestal School District to foster respect, understanding and acceptance among children and staff who represent different religions, races and nationalities. Since religious institutions and diverse beliefs have continued to be a force in shaping our culture, awareness of these significant forces is part of a complete education. Thus, it is important that the teaching about, not of, religion be conducted in a factual, objective and respectful manner.

The District emphasizes that religious themes in the arts, literature, and history, both in curriculum and school activities, be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced comprehensive and inclusive study of these areas. Studies and/or related activities must not foster a particular religious tenet or demean any religious or non-religious belief. In that spirit of tolerance, students and staff members should be excused from participating in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs unless there are clear issues of overriding concern that would prevent it.

Other Holidays

Holidays such as Halloween, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day have been acculturated to the point that the District recognizes them as secular events which may be recognized by school sponsored activities. Such activities must not interfere with instruction. Further, such activities are expected to be linked with curriculum as much as possible.

Adopted 1991
Adopted 8/13/13