

5096 Freedom of Assembly/Freedom of Religion 5096

The Board recognizes that the United States Constitution's First Amendment imposes two equally important obligations on public schools.

First, schools shall 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.

Students shall have the same right to engage in religious activities and discussion as they have to engage in other comparable activities. In general, this means that students may pray in a non-disruptive manner during the school day when they are not engaged in school activities and instruction, subject to the same rules as apply to other speech rights.

On each school day, before classes of instruction officially convene, a period of not more than 5 minutes shall be available to those who may wish to exercise their right to freedom of assembly and participate voluntarily in the free exercise of religion. There shall be no teacher supervision of this free exercise of religion, nor shall there be any prescribed or proscribed form or content of prayer.

Ref: RSA 189:1-b

Adopted: 8/1978

Revised: 5/2010, 4/2015