

TWIN LAKES STEM ACADEMY RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION (609)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to identify the status of religious practice and prayer as it pertains to the program of Twin Lakes STEM Academy.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Twin Lakes STEM Academy shall neither promote nor disparage any religious belief or nonbelief. Twin Lakes STEM Academy encourages all students and employees to have appreciation for and tolerance of each other's views.
- B. Twin Lakes STEM Academy will comply with Section 9542 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that requires districts to certify that no school policy prevents, or otherwise, denies participation in constitutionally protected prayer in the public school.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the Board Chair to make sure that every school board member know and understand the policies of the school regarding religious practice and school prayer.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the Director to make sure that every staff member understands the establishment clause and the policies and practices of the school regarding religious practice and prayer.
- C. The Director will make it possible so that reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate any student who wishes to be excused from attendance at school for the purpose of religious instruction or observance of religious holidays.
- D. The Director will make it possible so that reasonable accommodations will be made so that students and staff can pray at school as constitutionally permitted.

IV. STAFF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

When functioning as a teacher or administrator, school officials may not encourage or discourage student religious or anti-religious activity and may not engage in religious activities with students at the school. School officials may take part in private religious activity during the school day if the activity is in conformance with rules and regulations generally applicable to the use of private time, or before or after school during non-instructional time.

V. STUDENT RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

Students have the right to engage in religious activities during the school day so long as those activities do not interfere with the rights of others and so long as students conform to the rules that normally apply to any given setting.

Students have the right to pray individually or to pray in groups and/or engage in religious discussions during the school day when they are not engaged in school activities and instruction, subject to the same rules of order as apply to other student speech. Prayer or other religious discussion shall not interfere with the rights of others.

VI. RELEASE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 12 (3) a student may be excused from school for a period not to exceed three aggregate hours in one week for religious instruction.

VII. RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Religious holidays shall not be observed at Twin Lakes STEM Academy. Students may be excused from school to celebrate religious holidays.

Adopted: 6/15/14

Revised: 10/28/24