



POLICY 5.095

4-D I recommend that the Board adopt the proposed revised Policy 5.095, entitled “Absences for Religious Reasons.”

[Contact: Ira Margulies, PX 45857.]

Adoption

CONSENT ITEM

- The Board approved development of this revised Policy at the development reading on September 24, 2008.
- This revision provides the circumstances under which students shall be excused from attendance for religious instruction, observation of a religious holiday or because the tenets of the student’s religion forbid secular activity at such time.
- Procedures to address absence for religious reasons are provided. Annual notification of this policy and related procedure and guidelines is also included.
- This revision also updates statutory references.

POLICY 5.095

ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS

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3 1. Purpose. To ensure compliance with state laws, rules and regulations regarding the
4 absences of students for religious reasons and to recognize the School District's
5 responsibility to enforce the attendance requirements of the state.

- 6 2. Policy. Students shall be excused from attendance on a particular day or
7 days, or for part of a day, and shall be excused from any examination, study or
8 work assignment for religious instruction, observation of a religious holiday or
9 because of the tenets of his or her religion forbid secular activity at such time, when
10 such requests are made by the parent or guardian consistent with this policy.
11 Students shall be afforded an opportunity to make up missed work any
12 examination, study or work assignment which has been missed for religious
13 purposes, and without adverse effects if absent from school because of their
14 religious holidays.
 - 15 a. The religious instruction shall be the responsibility of the religious institution.
 - 16 b. Transportation of the student to and from the religious institution where the
17 religious instruction or holiday observance is held shall be the responsibility of
18 the parent or guardian.
 - 19 c. The School Board shall not be liable for the health, safety and welfare of a
20 student while on release time during the school day for religious instruction or
21 holidays. The student's parent or legal guardian shall execute an appropriate
22 form which indemnifies and holds harmless the School Board from all liability
23 for conduct which occurs on property over which the School Board has no
24 control or supervision as a condition precedent to approval of the requested
25 time for religious instruction.
 - 26 d. The Principal may ask the religious institution for attendance records.

- 27 3. Procedures. The following procedures are provided to address requests for
28 students to be absence for religious reasons.
 - 29 a. The school principal shall implement this policy on an individual basis. School
30 principals and administrators are encouraged to consider the religious
31 calendars of various religious groups when planning calendars for such
32 matters as testing, commencement, major athletic and other school related
33 matters.
 - 34 b. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school principal of the
35 need for release time for religious reasons, and to work with the school

36 principal and teachers to develop an agreement to make up examinations,
37 homework/project assignments, and class work missed during the established
38 release times.

39 c. Prior to the student's absence for religious reasons, a written request must be
40 provided by the parent or guardian.

41 d. In the event of a complaint regarding the failure to provide for religious
42 accommodations, the complainant may appeal directly to the Area
43 Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

44 4. Annual Notification. Students and Parents shall be notified annually of this
45 policy and of any related procedures and guidelines.

46 5. Implementation of Policy. The Superintendent shall develop administrative
47 procedures and guidelines to implement this policy.

48 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Fla. Stat. §§ 1001.41(2), 1001.42(25), 1003.21(2) (b)
49 232.0225(2) (b), FS; 240.134, FS; 232.2462,

50 LAWS IMPLEMENTED: Fla. Stat. §§ 1003.21(2) (b), 1003.24, 1006.33 232.0225(2) (b),
51 FS; 6A-1.09614, F.A.C.

52 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE: 6A-1.09514, FAC

53 HISTORY: 12/13/90; ___/___2008

Legal Signoff:

The Legal Department has reviewed proposed Policy 5.095 and finds it legally sufficient for development by the Board.

Attorney

Date