

## **Instruction**

### **Opening Exercises, School Observances, Ceremonies, and Programs**

Each homeroom shall hold opening exercises including a salute to the flag and the reading of announcements and notices.

As mandated by State Statute, the Board of Education "...shall provide opportunity at the start of each school day to allow those students and teachers who wish to do so the opportunity to observe such time in silent meditation."

The morning opening exercises will include the Pledge of Allegiance. Those students who have made the personal decision not to recite the "Pledge" may be excused from participating. Non-participants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

The Board of Education shall provide opportunity at the start of each day to allow those students and teachers who wish to do so, the opportunity to observe such time in silent meditation.

### **School Observances, Ceremonies, and Programs**

In observances of legal, State and National holidays, recognition may be made as appropriate as the historical and cultural value of such holidays.

Ceremonial events shall be conducted as appropriate to the occasion, with sensitivity and respect towards students whose personal cultural background may differ from that of the event being observed.

School programs are presented as valuable components of the total education program. As such, teachers shall be free to use music, literature, drama, poetry, art, and dance of any faith, based upon the choice of the teacher, principal, and school staff, and inconsideration of the artistic merit, and/or performance suitability of the available material and the interests and capabilities of the teachers and students producing the program. Similar academic criteria shall apply to any aspect of the curriculum. Students and teachers shall have the right to refuse for reasons of conscience to participate in or attend any activity or program which includes any material which they may deem to be contrary to their personal beliefs.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-16a Silent meditation.

10-29a Certain days to be proclaimed by governor. Distribution and number of proclamations

## **Instruction**

### **Opening Exercises, School Observances, Ceremonies, and Programs**

Legal Reference: (continued)

10-230 Flags for schoolrooms and schools

PA 02-119 An Act Concerning Bullying Behavior in Schools and Concerning the Pledge of Allegiance

*Lee v. Weisman*, 90-1014, U.S. Supreme Court, 60 V.S.L.W. 4723.

Policy adopted: November 6, 2003

WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Waterford, Connecticut