

Alsea School District 7J

Code: **IGAC**
Adopted: 11/09/94
Readopted: 7/12/10; 1/13/16
Orig. Code(s): IGAC

Teaching about Religion

The district believes that the teaching of any sectarian view or religious doctrine is not the responsibility of the school. In accordance with the U.S. Constitution, U.S. Supreme Court decisions and the laws of the state of Oregon, the teaching of sectarian religion in the public schools is forbidden. A district must maintain strict neutrality, neither aiding nor opposing religion. Therefore, such instruction is prohibited in the district.

Teachers should recognize and respect various alternative beliefs. Students should be advised that it is their responsibility, as informed citizens, to have sectarian ideas and other religious beliefs explained to them by theological experts. The neutrality requirement suggests an ongoing search for sensitivity, understanding, appreciation and factual information about cultural and religious diversity. It also mandates that schools refrain from advocacy of a particular religious position.

Religion influences many areas of education such as literature and history. Religion's role in civilization can and should be properly taught. Teachers may provide information and opportunity for students to study the forms of various religions. It is proper for teachers to teach about religion as opposed to teaching sectarian beliefs, although study of the Bible and other sacred documents as literary forms may inform students concerning particular sectarian belief.

Teachers shall not advocate, openly or covertly or by subtlety, a particular religion or religious belief.

If a parent objects to his/her student being exposed to certain ideas, teachings or knowledge or not being exposed to certain ideas, teachings or knowledge, the district has policies that allow the parent to exercise one or both of two options:

1. The district allows for released time for students to take part in religious instruction;
2. The district allows for the option of excluding students from any curriculum parents find objectionable.

The regular instructional program and the exercise of these options provides reasonable educational opportunities for all students.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 332.107](#)
[ORS 336.035](#)

U.S. CONST. amend. I.
OR. CONST., art. I.