



Book	BYLAWS AND POLICIES
Section	8000 OPERATIONS
Title	RELIGIOUS/PATRIOTIC CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES
Code	8800
Status	Active
Legal	I.C. 1-1-11-2; I.C. 1-2-2-1; I.C. 1-2-3-6; I.C. 20-30-5-0.5, 20-30-5-4.5; 20 U.S.C. 4071 et seq.
Adopted	September 15, 2020

Decisions of the United States Supreme Court have made it clear that it is not the province of a public school to advance or inhibit religious beliefs or practices. Under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, this remains the inviolate province of the individual and the church of his/her choice. The rights of any minority, no matter how small, must be protected. No matter how well intended, either official or unofficial sponsorship of religiously oriented activities by the school are offensive to some and tend to supplant activities which should be the exclusive province of individual religious groups, churches, private organizations, or the family.

Edison School of the Arts staff members shall not use prayer, religious readings, or religious symbols as a devotional exercise or in an act of worship or celebration. Edison School of the Arts shall not act as a disseminating agent for any person or outside agency for any religious or anti-religious document, book, or article. Distribution of such materials on IPS property by any party shall be in accordance

with Policy 7510 and AG 7510 - Use of IPS Facilities and Policy 9700 and AG 9700 - Relations with Special Interest Groups.

The Board acknowledges that it is prohibited from adopting any policy or rule respecting or promoting an establishment of religion or prohibiting any person from the free, individual, and voluntary exercise or expression of the individual's religious beliefs. Such exercise or expression may be limited to lunch periods or other non-instructional time periods when individuals are free to associate. However, an individual who is required by his/her religious beliefs to engage in religious exercise (e.g. a formal prayer during the school day) will be accommodated unless such accommodation would disrupt an educational function.

In order that the right of each student to the free exercise of religion is guaranteed within Edison School of the Arts and the freedom of each student to either engage in or refrain from religious observation on school grounds is subject to the least possible coercion from the State, the Board shall establish the daily observance of a moment of silence in each classroom or on Edison School of the Arts grounds.

Observance of religious holidays through devotional exercises or acts of worship is also prohibited. Acknowledgement of, explanation of, and teaching about religious holidays of various religions is encouraged. Celebration activities involving nonreligious decorations and use of secular works are permitted, but it is the responsibility of all faculty members to ensure that such activities are strictly voluntary, do not place an atmosphere of social compulsion or ostracism on minority groups or individuals, and do not interfere with the regular school program.

The United States flag shall be displayed in each classroom of Edison School of the Arts.

The flags of the United States and of Indiana shall be raised above each school and/or at other appropriate places during all school sessions, weather permitting. The flags shall be raised before the opening of school and taken down at its close every day.

The Board is strongly committed to teaching children to value our nation and the freedoms guaranteed by our constitution and democratic system of government. The Board understands that often we fail to pay respect to those outward symbols of America and all this country stands for – our flag and our national anthem.

Therefore, the Board requires Edison School of the Arts to take some time each day to honor the United States of America by having students recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States and to sing or play the Star Spangled Banner or other appropriate song honoring our country. The Board believes these actions will create a bond among our students and provide them a sense of belonging to the greater community of proud Americans whose courage and commitment has never been stronger.

The Board further recognizes that some students or staff members may have religious or other constitutionally protected reasons not to participate in these activities and those rights.