

Book	Policy Manual
Section	0-Requested policy 5223
Title	RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION
Code	po5223
Status	First Reading

#### 5223 - **NEW RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION**

The Board of Education desires to cooperate with those parents who wish to provide for religious instruction for their children but also recognizes its responsibility to enforce the attendance requirements of the State.

Students may be provided "released time" from school to attend a course in religious instruction conducted by a private entity off District property, provided that the following requirements are met, such students will not be considered absent when the:

- A. student's parent or guardian gives consent in writing;
- B. sponsoring entity maintains attendance records and makes them available to the District;
- C. sponsoring entity provides and assumes liability for the student; and
- D. student assumes responsibility for any missed school work.

Transportation of students to and from Released Time instruction is the complete responsibility of the sponsoring entity, the parent, guardian, and/or student. The Board of Education, its members, and employees are immune from liability for any injuries arising from transportation to and from Released Time instruction. Further, no Board funds will be expended for, and no District personnel shall be involved in the provision of religious instruction.

Students shall not be excused from a core curriculum subject course to attend Released Time instruction.

#### **[OPTION]**

**[x ]** High school students may earn up to two (2) units of high school credit for coursework completed during Released Time instruction. Such credits may substitute for credits required pursuant to R.C. 3313.603(C)(8).

The Board will evaluate the course based on secular criteria including, but not limited to:

- A. the number of hours of instructional time;
- B. a review of the course syllabus that reflects course requirements and materials used;
- C. the assessment methods used in the course; and
- D. the instructor's qualifications, which shall be similar to the qualification of other teachers in the District.

The decision as to whether to provide credit for a specific Released Time religious instruction course will be neutral as to religious content and will not involve any test for religious content or denominational affiliation.

Staff members shall not promote or discourage participation in release time programs for any religious instructional program.

Nothing herein shall constitute an endorsement of religion or infringe upon an individual's First Amendment rights.

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