

RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS

The Alleghany Highlands Schools Board is neutral in matters of religion. This means that Alleghany Highlands Public Schools

- assume no role or responsibility for the religious training of any student and
- do not become involved in the religious belief, disbelief or doubt of any student.

This neutrality does not preclude nor hinder the Alleghany Highlands Public Schools school division in fulfilling its responsibility to educate students to be tolerant and respectful of religious diversity. The division recognizes that one of its educational responsibilities is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion has played in the social, cultural and historical development of civilization.

Therefore, the division approaches religion from an objective, curriculum-related perspective, encouraging all students and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other's religious and/or non-religious views. In that spirit of respect, students and staff members may be excused from participating in activities that are contrary to their religious beliefs.

Students may express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. Such home and classroom work shall be evaluated by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the schools.

The School Board may authorize, as an elective in grades nine through 12 with appropriate credits toward graduation, a comparative religion class that focuses on the basic tenets, history, and religious observances and rites of world religions.

Adopted: July 1, 2022

Legal Refs.: U.S. Const. amend. I.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-202.1.