



Board Policy 2000 - STUDY AND PERFORMANCE OF MUSIC OF RELIGIOUS ORIGIN

District schools are places in which beliefs and religious convictions are treated with respect and in which the religious liberty and rights of all students are protected. Columbus schools may not promote, endorse, or prohibit religion.

A comprehensive music education requires the study of a broad range of music including music outside of the student's musical experience. As with many other types of music, music of religious origin or with sacred lyrics has played an important role in American culture and history and may be a part of classroom instruction, school concerts, and school programs if any of the following criteria are met:

1. The music is chosen based on sound educational principles and is used for pedagogical purposes that demonstrably support the Districts' music and other curricula;
2. The musical selection is chosen to help students develop musical skills and abilities set forth by the Districts' music curriculum such as expressive singing, increased tone production, balance, blend, phrasing, articulation, rhythm, dynamics, range development, competency in part singing and sight singing;
3. The musical selection has:
 - a. Recognized artistic merit; or
 - b. Historical, social or cultural significance defined by and studied as part of the Districts' curricula
4. The musical selection is part of a balanced program or course of instruction,
5. In the context of the concert program or course of instruction, the musical selections respect diversity and do not manifest a preference for religion or particular religious beliefs;
6. The musical selection serves to prepare students for future music education or careers in music;
7. For large groups, soloists, and ensembles that participate in competitions conducted by the Ohio Music Educators Association or similar organizations, the selections are part of the performance list compiled by the sponsoring organizations.

The District will establish a resource committee consisting of the Districts' coordinators and their supervisors, District legal counsel, a school principal, and a music teacher. The Superintendent shall make information regarding the resource committee available to the public. The chair shall be designated by the Superintendent and shall have authority, on behalf and in consultation with the resource committee to oversee and enforce this policy. Principals, teachers, parents, and community members are encouraged to seek information and advice from the resource committee on questions concerning the application of this policy and the District's curriculum regarding the selection of musical pieces for performance or instruction.

The Board of Education expects that all affected administrators and teachers will adhere to the requirements of this policy and directs the administration to develop a plan for implementation within 60 days of its adoption. The plan shall:

1. Establish goals for selection of music as part of a well-rounded education;
2. Set forth criteria for selection of music and for music curriculum development;
3. Establish mechanisms for ongoing communication with and training programs for all administrators and teachers affected by this policy;
4. Promulgate guidelines, including guidelines that protect students who do not subscribe to a personal religious persuasion; and
5. Draft and distribute guidelines and timelines for recourse if parents, teachers, or students perceive that their beliefs concerning religion are not respected or a failure to comply with this policy.

The guidelines shall encourage informal resolution of complaints. The process shall be initiated when complaining student, parent, or teacher submits to the teacher or principal as is appropriate, a written description of the matter of concern. The guidelines shall also set forth a procedure for reporting to the committee of complaints and their resolution. Except as prohibited by state or federal law, all reports made to the resource committee are public records pursuant to R.C. 149.43.

If the student, parent, or teacher is not satisfied by the resolution at the school level, the complaint may be brought to the resource committee, which shall investigate the matter and issue a written determination, which shall be transmitted to the complaining party, the affected administrator and teacher, and such other persons as the resource committee deems appropriate. Except as prohibited by federal and state law, the written description of the matter of concern and the written determination are public records pursuant to R.C. 149.43.

The purpose of graduation is to recognize and celebrate the achievement of high school seniors and to allow their families and the community at large to honor their accomplishment. Because the performance of vocal music containing religious lyrics at Commencement exercises may distract from this purpose and be inconsistent with the criteria mandated with this policy, it shall not be performed at graduation ceremonies.