


HOWARD GARDNER MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

	Students/Families	SF22-1002
	Parental Rights to Excusal from Curriculum Based on Religious Beliefs Policy	ADOPTED DATE: October 18, 2022 REVISED DATE:

No religious belief or non-belief should be promoted by the Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School (“Charter School”) or its employees, and none should be disparaged. The Charter School should encourage all students and staff members to be tolerant and respectful of each other’s religious views. The Charter School should foster understanding and mutual respect among students and parents with differing religious beliefs or views.

To this point, the Charter School recognizes the statutory right of parents to have their children excused from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs. Therefore, the Board of Trustees (“Board”) directs the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) to respond to parent requests for exemptions from curriculum requirements using the following guidelines in accordance with applicable State regulations:

1. Maintain the expectation that all students complete the curriculum as established by the Charter School in conjunction with State Board of Education curriculum rules and regulations.
2. Students should be excused from participating in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs or cultural beliefs unless there are clear issues of law that would prevent such excuse.
3. Evaluate all requests to ensure that the materials and/or practices to which there are objections do not violate the protections of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America.

It shall be the policy of the Board that:

1. Students may be excused from portions of courses when the subject matter is incompatible with the religious beliefs of such students and/or their parents.
2. Only those students may be excused whose parents or guardians have submitted a “written request for exemption” to the CEO.
3. The CEO shall review the request for exemption, notifying parents of his/her recommendations within ten (10) days.

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4. Parents in disagreement with the CEO's decision may appeal to the Board of Trustees, who shall review and respond to the parental written request, within ten (10) days.
5. One (1) copy of the request shall be retained in the student's permanent school records, one (1) copy kept by the CEO, and one (1) copy submitted to the teacher(s) from whose instruction the student is to be excused.
6. It shall not be the responsibility of the Charter School or any of its employees to ensure that the student exercises his/her right to be excused in accordance with a parental request. It shall be the responsibility of the student to request permission to leave class when the specific instruction objected to is presented. When the student seeks to be excused, the teacher shall excuse the student if the Principal or CEO has a copy of the written request and the written request adequately describes the specific instruction.
7. The parent/guardian and/or student may request suggested replacement educational activities. The only permissible educational activity for this purpose shall be in the nature of replacement instruction that is consistent with the learning objectives set for the course and does not require the provision of any extra resources by the Charter School.
8. The CEO or his/her designee shall determine where the student shall report during the time the student is excused.
9. All students excused from specific instruction shall be required to achieve the academic standards established by the Charter School as necessary for graduation.

Any complaints with regard to a Board policy or any aspect of the Charter School's curriculum shall be brought in accordance with the Charter School's Complaint Policy.