

THE CELEBRATION OF HOLIDAYS

- 1.0 The Board of Education creates this policy with a shared commitment of respect for individual religious beliefs expressed in the constitutional guarantee of religious liberty, while ensuring its educational goal to advance students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion plays in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.
 - 1.1. The Board acknowledges that it is neither possible nor desirable for our schools to simply ignore religion and avoid all materials with a religious theme or implication
- 2.0 Scarborough School Department may neither promote nor inhibit religious belief or non-belief, so long as expressions of religious belief or non-belief are consistent with school rules and respect the rights of others.
- 3.0 The Board directs its administrators, teachers, and students, with the cooperation of parents and community, to make practical and reasonable decisions regarding religious holidays when in school. This requires a sensitivity to the needs of every student and a willingness to steer a course between the avoidance of all references to religion, on the one hand, and the promotion of religion on the other.
- 4.0 The intent of this policy and related regulations, which reflect and balance the academic and instructional mission of our schools, the law, and legal guidelines related to the separation of church and state, the richness and diversity of our population, and sensitivity to the rights and dignity of the individual, as they relate to the celebration of holidays.
- 5.0 The Scarborough School Department will offer to its faculty opportunities for professional development that address the law and legal guidelines, acknowledge the need for sensitivity when dealing with issues of religious belief and customs, and promotes open school/home communications in these matters.

Adopted: October 20, 1994

Revised: November 7, 2002