

# REFERENCE COPY

FILE: IND  
Critical

## EXPLANATION: CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

**This policy has been revised to reflect the requirements of the Missouri Constitution, as amended by the vote of the people in August. On August 7, 2012, the state held a referendum revising Article 1, § 5, of the Missouri Constitution. Among other changes, the new language requires "that all free public schools receiving state appropriations shall display, in a conspicuous and legible manner, the text of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States." This policy has been revised to include this requirement.**

*MSBA recommends that copies of this document be routed to the following areas because the content is of particular importance to them. The titles on this list may not match those used by the district. Please forward copies to the district equivalent of the title indicated.*

X	Board Secretary		Business Office		Coaches/Sponsors
	Facility Maintenance		Food Service		Gifted
	Human Resources	X	Principals		Library/Media Center
	Health Services		Counselor		Special Education
	Transportation	X	Public Info/Communications		Technology

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## CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The Board of Education recognizes the value of district-sponsored programs and ceremonies during school hours and at other appropriate times. Recognizing achievement and talent encourages further learning. District-sponsored programs, ceremonies and observances also provide an opportunity to involve the community in public education.

### Programs, Ceremonies and Observances

1. The flag of the United States of America will be prominently displayed, either on the outside of the building or upon a pole erected in the school yard, at every school in the district during school hours.
2. Pursuant to state law, the Pledge of Allegiance will be recited in at least one scheduled class of every student no less than once a week. However, no student will be required to participate in the recitation.
3. The text of the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution will be displayed in all school buildings in a conspicuous and legible manner.
4. Teachers and students should observe the following days with the appropriate exercises, as required by law:
  - ▶ Bird Appreciation Day (March 21)
  - ▶ Prisoners of War Remembrance Day (April 9)
  - ▶ Patriots' Day (April 19)
  - ▶ Constitution Day and Citizenship Day (September 17, or the preceding or following week if this date falls on a weekend or holiday)
  - ▶ Missouri Day (the third Wednesday of October)
  - ▶ Veterans Day (as closely as possible to November 11)
  - ▶ Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (December 7)
45. The district may observe the following days and months, as recommended in state statute:
  - ▶ Missouri Lifelong Learning Month (February)

- ▶ Math, Engineering, Technology and Science Week (the first week of March)
- ▶ Arbor Day (the first Friday in April)
- ▶ Jefferson Day (April 13)
- ▶ Emancipation Day (June 19)
- ▶ Emergency Services Day (September 11)
- ▶ POW/MIA Recognition Day (the third Friday of September)
- ▶ Disability History and Awareness Month (October)
- ▶ Bill of Rights Day (December 15)

56. The district may host a diploma ceremony on or around Veterans Day for any veteran receiving an honorary diploma from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) pursuant to "Operation Recognition."

The superintendent or designee will create administrative procedures addressing how ceremonies and observances will be conducted.

### **Religious Content in Programs and Ceremonies**

The schools of the FIELD(DistrictCommonName), as well as all employees of the district as governmental officials, are required by law to remain neutral and refrain from endorsing any particular religious belief. However, this policy should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays and religious differences.

In particular, music, art, literature and drama with religious themes and programs involving religious themes will be permitted if presented in an objective manner without sectarian indoctrination. Religious content included in any student performance or ceremony will be selected on the basis of independent educational merit.

To the extent required by law, district employees or officials shall not lead attendees of a district-sponsored event in prayer or any other religious ritual, nor shall they direct, whether implicitly or explicitly, a student to lead attendees in a prayer or any other religious ritual. However, this policy shall not be used to deny any student, employee or district official any personal legal right of expression.

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***Note: The reader is encouraged to check the index located at the beginning of this section for other pertinent policies and to review administrative procedures and/or forms for related information.***

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Adopted: FIELD(AdoptDate)

Revised:

Cross Refs: KG, Community Use of District Facilities

Legal Refs: Mo. Const. art. I, §§ 5 - 8, art. IX, § 8  
§§ 9.030, .040, .070, .072, .100, .105, .110, .115, .130, .138, .140, .141, .161,  
160.360, 162.946, 170.049, 171.021, RSMo.  
U.S. Const. amend. I  
Patriotic and National Observances and Ceremonies, 36 U.S.C. § 106  
*Santa Fe Independent Sch. Dist. v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290 (2000)

FIELD(DistrictLocationLine)