

Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION
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## 5223 - RELEASED TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The Board of Education desires to cooperate with those parents who wish to provide for religious instruction for their children but also recognizes its responsibility to enforce the attendance requirements of the State.

Students may be provided "released time" from school to attend a course in religious instruction conducted by a private entity off District property, for not more than one day per week, provided that the following requirements are met, such students will not be considered absent when the:

- A. student's parent or guardian gives consent in writing. The Sponsoring Entity will provide the District with a copy of the written consent for each student before a student will be permitted to leave school grounds to participate in the Program. ;
- B. sponsoring entity maintains attendance records and makes them available to the District. The Sponsoring Entity shall defer to District office staff on attendance procedures for individual buildings. Sponsoring Entity shall ensure students sign out and sign in upon return to school using the District attendance process on each day they participate in the Program. Sponsoring Entity will ensure that the District has a copy of the attendance sheet showing the sign in and sign out of students each day upon the students' departure and return.;
- C. sponsoring entity provides and assumes liability for the student and provides a certificate of insurance to the District; and
- D. student assumes responsibility for any missed school work.
- E. Sponsoring Entity shall not provide recruiting materials, business cards, candy, treats, trinkets, etc. for students to take back to the school building. Staff of Sponsoring Entity may not distribute those materials to students who are not in the Program.

Transportation of students to and from Released Time instruction is the complete responsibility of the sponsoring entity, the parent, guardian, and/or student. The Board of Education, its members, and employees are immune from liability for any injuries arising from transportation to and from Released Time instruction. Further, no Board funds will be expended for, and no District personnel shall be involved in the provision of religious instruction. The Sponsoring Entity will ensure that all vehicles used to transport students, including but not limited to vans, meet the same safety standards required of District vehicles.

Students shall only be excused during lunch or recess to attend Released Time instruction.

Shortened days, such as two-hour delays due to inclement weather, scheduled two-hour delays, early release days, etc., as well as State testing weeks are excluded from release time for religious instruction.

The Superintendent, on behalf of the Board of Education, shall collaborate with a sponsoring entity of a released time course in religious instruction to identify a time to offer the course during the school day.

The Superintendent, in his/her sole discretion, may temporarily suspend Released Time for Religious Instruction if a private entity fails to adhere to the provisions of this or any other policy of the Board.

Staff members shall not promote or discourage participation in release time programs for any religious instructional program.

The Sponsoring Entity certifies that any persons working with District students in the Program have passed a criminal background check, including a BCI/FBI criminal records check. The Sponsoring Entity shall not permit any person to work in the Program with District students who has been convicted of or pled guilty of or no contest to any criminal offense that would disqualify an individual from employment with an Ohio public school district.

Nothing herein shall constitute an endorsement of religion or infringe upon an individual's First Amendment rights.