



## Ohio Revised Code

### Section 3320.04 Religious accommodations for public school students.

Effective: October 24, 2024

Legislation: House Bill 214 - 135th General Assembly

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Each school district board of education shall adopt a policy that reasonably accommodates the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of individual students with regard to all examinations or other academic requirements and absences for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system. The policy shall satisfy all of the following conditions:

(A) The policy shall permit a student in any of grades kindergarten through twelve to be absent for up to three religious expression days each school year to take holidays for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system or participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. The district shall not impose an academic penalty as a result of a student being absent as permitted in the policy. The policy shall also permit students to participate in interscholastic athletics or other extracurricular activities on days in which the student was otherwise absent for a religious expression day.

(B)(1) The policy shall require that students be provided with alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements missed due to an absence described in division (A) of this section if not later than fourteen school days after the first day of school, or fourteen school days after the date of enrollment for a student who transfers to or enrolls in the district after the first day of school, the parent or guardian of a student provides the school principal with written notice of up to three specific dates for which alternative accommodations are requested, if an absence approved under division (B)(2) of this section conflicts with an examination or other academic requirement on that date.

(2) The school principal shall approve not more than three written requests per school year from a student's parent or guardian for an excused absence under division (A) of this section. The school principal shall approve such requests without inquiry into the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system. However, the school principal may verify a request received under division (A) of this section by contacting the parent or guardian whose signature appears on the request. If a parent or guardian disputes having signed such a request, the school principal may deny the request.



Upon approval of a request that satisfies division (B)(1) of this section, a school principal shall require the appropriate classroom teacher or teachers to schedule a time and date for an alternative examination or other academic requirement if the approved student absence creates a conflict, which may be before or after the time and date the examination or other academic requirement was originally scheduled.

(C) The policy shall require the district board to post both of the following in a prominent location on the district's web site:

(1) A copy of the policy adopted under this section, which shall include the contact information of an individual who can provide further information about the policy;

(2) A nonexhaustive list of major religious holidays, festivals, and religious observations, which may include, Eid, Good Friday, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, for which an excused absence under this section shall not be unreasonably withheld or denied.

The state superintendent shall provide each district with a nonexhaustive list of major religious holidays or festivals for the next two school years, including Eid, Good Friday, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, at the beginning of each school year. Each district may adopt the state superintendent's list in its entirety or choose which holidays to include on its list.

Each time a district's policy is posted, printed, or published, including as described in divisions (C) and (D) of this section, the district shall include a statement that the list is nonexhaustive, and the list may not be used to deny accommodation to a student for a holiday or festival of the student's faith or religious or spiritual belief system that does not appear on the list.

Nothing in this section, and no inclusion or exclusion of a religious holiday or festival on the list posted by a district, shall preclude a student from full and reasonable accommodations for any sincerely held religious beliefs and practices with regard to all examinations or other academic requirements and absences for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system provided under this section.

(D) The policy shall require school districts annually to convey to parents and guardians the policy



adopted under this section, including a description of the general procedure for requesting accommodations. The manner in which the school district conveys the information shall be determined at the discretion of the district.

(E) The policy shall include a procedure under which a student, parent, or guardian may notify the district of any grievance with regard to the implementation of the policy required under this section.

(F) Any days excused under this section shall not be considered in determining absence hours for the purposes of parental notification under division (C)(1) of section 3321.191 of the Revised Code.