

SILENT MEDITATION POLICY

Section 3029-a of the Education Law provides that teachers may be permitted to conduct a brief period of meditation at the opening of the school day. Religious exercises are prohibited.

Students may stand or sit, the only requirement being that they respect a period of silence during which any given student may meditate or remain silent while others meditate. The school staff will not discriminate against students regarding their posture or attitude towards a period of meditation.

Teachers will discuss with their students what meditation means, but will do so such that no particular dogma or religion is emphasized. The staff will refrain from coercing students to meditate as they define it, and will keep other students from coercing students regarding their concept of meditation.

Meditation is defined as:

Act of thought, especially close or continued thought. A form of very private devotion consisting of deep, continuous reflection on some person, condition (war, poverty, current event, etc.) or religious theme. To contemplate or ponder by introspection of one's thoughts or feelings or the feelings of others.

In no way should the staff, by its actions (directly or indirectly), discriminate against those students by reasons of color, race, or religion, who during this period choose not to meditate.

No student during this period of meditation should be:

1. Removed from the room.
2. Required to sit or stand.
3. Told to pray or to whom one should pray.
4. Lectured concerning a particular dogma.

Legal Reference: New York State Education Law Section 3029-a

APPROVED: BOARD OF EDUCATION

March 17, 1992

REVISED: September 4, 2001