



AP 3-210 – REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

BACKGROUND

Wherever possible, when a student or family voices an objection to a curriculum based on their religion or creed, there should be a meeting with the parents (or the student if s/he is at least 18 years old) and the teacher and/or administrator to gather more information about the nature of the objection. Very often, small adjustments and modifications can be made to the way the curriculum is delivered so that it respectfully addresses and accommodates the family's concern. In such cases, no exemption is necessary.

Complete exemptions need only be considered when there is no accommodation that is acceptable to the family and they want the student exempted from the curriculum altogether. Where applicable, the family should always be informed of and understand the alternatives to compulsory high school credits.

When a curricular exemption is granted as a religious accommodation, the exemption must be official and proper notification of the exemption must be provided. We suggest that the school forward a letter to the parents confirming that it is going to provide the exemption as per their request, and put a copy of this letter in the document file for that student. Religious reasons would be cited as the purpose for the exemption. This formalizes the process and also allows the child to continue to be exempt in future years at the school or in another school if they were to move. On the report card, an appropriate comment would be provided indicating that the student was exempted from certain course content for religious reasons.

PROCEDURES

1. A written request for religious accommodation regarding school curriculum or resources is presented to the teacher/school administrator by the parent/guardian.
2. Teacher and school administration will meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the request and attempt to reach an agreement on the accommodation(s) provided.
 - a. The **Religious Accommodation Forms (AP 3-212 & AP 3-213)** will be completed by the school administrator at this meeting.
 - i. The parent's written request will be stapled to the Religious Accommodation Forms at this time.
3. If an accommodation agreement is reached the **Reasonable Accommodation of Religious Beliefs Checklist (AP 3-211)** will be completed and attached to the front of the documents containing the **Religious Accommodation Forms** and the **parent's written request**. **The completed package will be placed in the students cum file.**
4. If an accommodation agreement is not reached the **Reasonable Accommodation of Religious Beliefs Checklist (AP 3-211)** will be completed and attached to the front of the documents containing the **Religious Accommodation Forms** and the **parent's written request**. **The completed package will be forwarded to the Superintendent.**
 - a. The Superintendent will review the request and consult with internal and external sources and will make a decision to approve, deny, or modify the accommodation.



- i. The parent shall be informed in writing of the decision.
 1. If the request was denied or modified the parent may seek internal redress through the school board, or external redress.
- ii. **The decision and all documentation will be placed in the students cum file.**

Reference:

Responding to Religious Diversity in Manitoba's Schools: A Guide for Educators (Draft 2015)

Adopted: September 4, 2018