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| <p style="text-align: center;">STRAIT REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD <i>Excellence in Lifelong Learning</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>POLICIES AND GUIDELINES</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Education III-B-1</p> |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">Curriculum and Instruction DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES</p> |
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DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES and RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

POLICY STATEMENT

The Strait Regional School Board recognizes that it serves a population with a diversity of religious beliefs and affiliations, and that its programs must respect cultural and religious pluralism, promote tolerance and be mindful of the fundamental religious freedoms which are protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Therefore the Board will not sanction devotional exercises or denominational instruction being conducted in its schools during instructional time as prescribed in the public school program for the Province of Nova Scotia.

GUIDELINES

1. Use of facilities for devotional exercises
 - 1.1 Groups wishing to use school facilities for devotional exercises or religious instruction during times not designated for the daily work of the school may apply to the Board for such use according to procedures outlined in the Board policy regulating the use of school facilities.

2. Festivities and observances
 - 2.1 A decision as to how to accommodate a student who may be excused from participation in particular exercises which have a religious theme (for example, Christmas concerts, certain patriotic functions) must be made in consultation with the parents or guardians of the affected children.

 - 2.2 There will be occasions when students of various faith backgrounds will be absent from school in order to observe religious holidays. These are excused absences and care must be taken, in consultation with parents/guardians, to ensure that such students will not be penalized for these absences.

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3. Role of Clergy in Times of Crisis

3.1 The Board recognizes that clergy can play an important role in providing support to students during a crisis. Schools are encouraged to include local clergy on their crisis intervention teams.

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