

FORT LA BOSSE SCHOOL DIVISION

TITLE - **RELIGIOUS EXERCISES***

POLICY - **IMDC-R**

Approval Date - 26/04/99

Cross Reference -

Resolution # - 160/99

Implementation - 26/04/99

Legal Reference - P.S.A. Section 84

Last Reviewed - 09/04/12

Based on Section 84 of the Public Schools Act, the Fort La Bosse Division will follow these guidelines:

1. Religious exercises are to be conducted in any of our School Division's schools only after the requirements of subsection 84.8 of the Public Schools Act have been met, a petition has been directed to the Board of Trustees, and the School Board instructs that school to make the necessary arrangements.
2. Schools will not take any action, which would be seen as initiating or prompting implementation of religious exercises. Parents who wish to survey parents of their school may send home and collect surveys. Schools will not send out ballots or surveys to parents/guardians to record whether or not they wish their children to participate in religious exercises.
3. The petition must contain a list of parents requesting that their children participate in the religious exercises. Schools will play no role in the petition process, and act on a petition only when so advised by the school board.
4. Once religious exercises are approved by the school board as a result of a parent/guardian driven petition, only those children whose parents/guardians have signed the petition may participate. It is reasonable for schools to advise parents (through newsletter or other means) that religious exercises are in place in the school and that those parents wishing to have their children participate can do so by written notification to the Principal. It must not be assumed that those parents/guardians who did not sign the petition want their children to participate in religious exercises and can remove their children if they do not want them to participate. It must be an opt-in process.
5. It is to be understood that the petition process must be completed on an annual basis and that School Board approval must be received annually as well.
6. The School Division and its respective schools are obligated to make the necessary arrangements to implement the religious exercises, according to the guidelines of the provincial legislation, as indicated in the parent petition.
7. Teachers and any other Divisional personnel are not compelled to conduct or supervise religious exercises. Participation by staff is voluntary. If staff are unwilling to conduct or supervise the religious exercises, members of the petitioning parent/guardian group would be required to supply the supervisory arrangements. The School Principal must approve these arrangements.
8. Religious exercises are to be held daily and will be no longer than ten (10) minutes. The religious exercises are not to be held during regular instructional time. Religious exercises may be held prior to instructional time or during recesses/noon breaks. Any petitioning group must seek approval of the school principal as to where and when religious exercises are held.
9. If a school does not receive unanimous approval for religious exercises, the procedure to be followed is that students participating in religious exercises will congregate in a common area, proceed with the religious exercises and then rejoin their classmates prior to the class which they are scheduled to attend begins.

