

**TALBOT COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MD 21601**

**POLICY CODE
9.39
ADOPTED: 02/10/93
REVIEWED: 07/30/10**

**SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES
(DAILY PERIOD OF SILENT MEDITATION)**

It is the intent of the Talbot County Board of Education to comply with State and Federal Laws concerning prayer and other religious activities in schools. To this end, the Board offers this information for guidance.

I. (Annotated Code of Maryland 7-104) Daily Period of Silent Meditation

- A. Silent Meditation – Principals and teachers in each public elementary and secondary school in this State may require all students to be present and participate in opening exercises on each morning of a school day and to meditate silently for approximately 1 minute.
- B. Praying or Reading Holy Scripture Permitted – During this period, a student or teacher may read the Holy Scripture or pray.
(An. Code 1957, Art. 77, S 78; 1978, ch. 22, S 2.)

II. Role of Religion in Education

- A. While the Talbot County Public Schools may appropriately recognize in its public practice and in its publicly supported educational programs the role of religion in American History, World History, and life, it is not the business of schools to promote religion or to use the school's coercive power to sanction or compel acceptance or religious creeds or practices.

III. Public Prayer

- A. The United States Supreme Court and other federal courts have issued opinions prohibiting prayer at public school student activities. These courts have held that prayer violates the Establishment of Religion Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Accordingly, prayer shall not be conducted at school sponsored student activities.

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