

## **INSTRUCTION 6144.1**

### **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION**

The Manchester Board of Education adheres to the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes 10-16(c), Prescribed Courses of Study, which specifies that curricular areas will be "planned, ongoing, and systematic" in their sequencing and presentation to students. The attainment of subject area knowledge is a building process for the learner, and gaps in this process can lead to a less well-educated individual. For any learning to occur, class attendance by students is essential; therefore, attendance policies are rigorous and are strictly enforced. To meet the goals of public education, the Manchester Board of Education provides a K-8 instructional program that is required for all students; electives are introduced at the High School level, where students must meet graduation requirements.

The Manchester Board of Education recognizes that circumstances may arise in which exemption from class attendance is requested by a student or a student's parent(s) or guardian(s). Also, the Manchester Board of Education recognizes the fundamental importance of parents in the education of their children, and its policy is to grant reasonable parental requests for exemption under the circumstances enumerated below:

#### **1) Family Life Education**

A student may be exempted from classes which teach the human reproductive system, sexually-transmitted diseases, parenting, and contraception upon the principal's receipt of a written request from the student's parent or guardian. Connecticut General Statute 10-16(e) allows exclusion from family life education programs.

#### **2) AIDS Instruction**

A student may be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) per Connecticut General Statute 10-19(b) upon the principal's receipt of a written request from the student's parent or guardian.

#### **3) Dissection of Animals**

A student may be exempted from dissection of animals upon the principal's receipt of a written request from the student's parent or guardian.

#### **4) Medical**

If a student is unable to participate in a class due to a medical reason, a statement from a physician must be presented to the principal stating the reason for his/her inability to participate.

#### **5) Religious**

Reasonable accommodation will be made in order to honor a request for exemption for religious reasons. The parent or guardian will be asked to present a written request for exemption to the principal stating the conflict involved.

## **6) Instructional Materials**

Occasionally, objections may be made to specific instructional materials. If the issue cannot be easily resolved at the classroom level, the provisions in the guidelines from Policy #6161, Selection of Instructional Materials, should be followed.

## **7) Other Reasons**

While most requests for exemption should be covered by the above categories, an occasional request may not fall into an established category. To maintain consistency in the application of this policy, such requests should follow the same administrative guidelines as below.

### **General**

- Any exemption from instruction does not excuse a student from the total hours and credits required for graduation.
- Any exemption should not interfere with the education provided to the other students in the class, put an undue burden on the smooth operation of the school, or negatively impact the school or district budget.
- Substance abuse education is required by State Statutes 10-19(a) for all students annually and students are not exempt.

Adopted: July 10, 1995

### **Administrative Guidelines**

1. Requests for exemption from instruction should be made initially to the classroom teacher, who best understands the requirements of the class and the impact of lost instructional time. Often, a concern expressed by a student or parent regarding a lesson or activity can be alleviated through an explanation by the teacher of its relevance to the student and the subject area.
2. If, following discussion with the teacher, the parent still desires exemption, a written request should be made to the building principal. Exemptions will be made based on the areas and conditions stated above in Policy 6144.1.
3. If a request for exemption made to the building principal does not fall into one of the categories above or the parent wishes to appeal the principal's decision, the parental request will be forwarded to the Superintendent or his/her designee for a decision. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the Board of Education.
4. Students exempt from instruction will be provided an alternative learning assignment by the classroom teacher and will be appropriately supervised by school personnel.

Adopted: July 10, 1995