RELEASE AND EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Excused Absence for Religious Instruction

Pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.75(p) and G.S. 115C-407.45, the School shall excuse a student's absence from school to attend released time religious instruction offered by a private entity during the school day. For the purposes of this policy, "released time religious instruction" means religious instruction offered by a private entity during the school day.

Consent Form

Before a student may be excused from school to attend released time religious instruction, the student's parent or legal guardian must complete and submit to the School a standard written consent form. The consent form shall provide notice to the parent or legal guardian that the parent or guardian is responsible for arranging transportation to and from any location where released time religious instruction occurs.

Documentation Required

The parent or legal guardian of a student attending released time religious instruction shall provide the School with written documentation affirming that the student attended released time religious instruction for each day that the student is absent for this purpose.

Make-Up Work

A student attending released time religious instruction shall make up all schoolwork that is missed due to the absence, including any tests or other work. The School shall give the student the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to an excused absence for released time religious instruction.

Notice of Request

The student's parent or legal guardian shall give the school director written notice of the request for an excused absence for released time religious instruction a reasonable time prior to the absence.

Prohibition on Use of State and Local Funds

The School shall not expend State or local funds, excluding any de minimis costs of administering this policy, to facilitate a student attending released time religious instruction.

Use of School Facilities

No private entity may offer released time religious instruction on School property, unless otherwise permitted by a neutral facility use policy adopted by the Board.

Time Limitations

The school director shall excuse at least **one** hour of released time religious instruction per absence. The school director shall not authorize excused absences totaling more than **four** hours of released time religious instruction in a single calendar week.

Other Excused Absences for Religious Observances

Pursuant to G.S. 115C-379(a1)(4), in addition to excused absences for released time religious instruction, school officials shall excuse a student's absences for religious observances required by the faith of a student or the student's parent or legal guardian. Each student shall be entitled to a **minimum of two such excused absences each academic year.** The student's parent or legal guardian may be required to give the school directorl written notice of the request for an excused absence a reasonable time prior to the religious observance. The student shall be given the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to an excused absence for a religious observance.

Revised: October 20, 2026

Ref.: S.L. 2026-41, § 7.54; G.S. 115C-218.75(p); G.S. 115C-407.45; G.S. 115C-379

Board approved July 17, 2026