



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

July 31, 2019

Alabama
State Board
of Education

MEMORANDUM

Governor Kay Ivey
President

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

Jackie Zeigler
District I
President Pro Tem

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

Tracie West
District II

SUBJECT: *Alabama Released Time Credit Act (Act 2019-281)*

Stephanie Bell
District III

The *Alabama Released Time Credit Act (Act 2019-281)* authorizes local boards of education to allow released time for student participation in religious instruction in an elective course. The law becomes effective August 1, 2019, and permits local education agencies (LEAs) to incorporate, within certain parameters, a constitutionally acceptable method of offering released time classes for earned elective credit for classes taken during the school day in released time programs. A copy of the Act is attached to this memorandum. School systems have the option to offer a Released Time Program but are not required to do so. Likewise, if a school system offers the program, granting elective credit is optional, not required.

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.
District IV

Ella B. Bell
District V

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has developed the attached model policy (Attachment A) for LEAs who choose to create a policy related to implementation of the Act to use in the development of local policies. Please be mindful that this is only a model policy and not intended to be fully inclusive of all released time issues you may face in your system. Should your local system choose to have a Released Time Program for student participation in religious instruction under the terms of this Act, your local system's policy should be developed in consultation with your staff and board attorney. This model policy is intended to offer general guidance and should be read in conjunction with existing ALSDE rules and guidelines concerning student learning.

Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D.
District VI

Jeff Newman
District VII
Vice President

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Sean J. Stevens, Education Administrator, Instructional Services, at (334) 694-4767 or sstevens@alsde.edu or Mrs. Jessica K. Sanders, Office of General Counsel, at (334) 694-4699 or jsanders@alsde.edu.

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.
District VIII

EGM/JKS

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
Secretary and
Executive Officer

Attachments

cc: Dr. Daniel Boyd
Dr. Elisabeth Davis
Mr. Sean J. Stevens
Mrs. Jessica K. Sanders

FY19-1008