

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

**CHAPTER 290-040-040
AUDITS AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

290-0400-40.02 Certain Teaching Techniques

(1) The State Board of Education is aware of concerns that certain techniques in some school materials or programs need clarification. The State Board of Education specifically prohibits the use of hypnosis and dissociative mental states. School personnel shall be prohibited from using any techniques that involve the induction of hypnotic states, guided imagery, meditation or yoga. These terms are defined as follows:

(a) **Dissociative Mental State** Another way of describing a hypnotic state. It refers to the separation or isolation of mental processes in such a way that they become split off from the main personality or lose their normal thought affect relationship. In such a state the boundary between the real and fantasy or illusion becomes blurred.

(b) **Hypnosis dissociative or altered state of consciousness**, usually artificially induced, characterized by heightened responsiveness to suggestions and commands, suspension of disbelief with lowering of critical judgment, the potential of alteration of perceptions. A common induction technique is that of progressive relaxation. This involves the serial or sequential use, in some combination, of the following: turning off the lights, reclining, closing the eyes, counted measured deep breathing, exercises, counting backwards, alternate tensing and relaxing of muscle groups, or repeating a single word or phrase.

(c) **Guided Imagery** can be described with various terms or labels, such as visualization, visual imagery, guided imagery or guided fantasy. Guided imagery is used as an induction or deepening technique of hypnosis/meditation. It involves the Communication or suggestion, describing a scene in which the student/subject is encouraged to experientially participate, normally following a progressive relaxation technique.

NOTE: Guided imagery, a common induction technique of hypnosis, should not be confused with the normal use of the imagination.

(d) **Meditation** An altered or dissociative state, of consciousness often synonymous with hypnosis associated with or derived from the mystical traditions of the East, sometimes called transcendental meditation, normally induced by progressive relaxation (H. Benson's Relaxation Response), focusing on deep Breaths and a mantra (repeated word or phrase).

NOTE: This is not to be confused with secular meditation which involves alert, reflective and cognitive contemplation.

(e) Yoga--A Hindu philosophy and method of religious training in which eastern meditation and contemplation are joined with physical exercises, allegedly to facilitate the development of body mind spirit.

(2) Consistent with state law, all school personnel charged with the responsibility of teaching students should take great care to emphasize that conduct prohibited by law is not appropriate in a civilized society. School personnel should also emphasize the consequences of conduct that is prohibited by law or that is highly likely to result in harmful consequences to the health of a person. Such conduct shall not be presented to students as legitimate options for their consideration. Nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as requiring the teaching of and/or about alternative lifestyles and/or illegal conduct.

(3) Local boards of education should make great efforts to identify parental concerns. Specifically, local boards of education shall, at a minimum, afford parents access to instructors and the opportunity to review the programs and materials to be utilized. For programs and materials not otherwise subject to state or local review processes, local boards should make every effort to seek the support of school patrons.

Authors: Bettye Fine Collins, Tazewell T. Shepard

Statutory Authority: Constitution of Alabama of 1901, amend 284, Code of Ala. 1975, §§16312, 16313.

History: New 1993



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Joseph B. Morton
State Superintendent
of Education

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Alabama
State Board
of Education

June 21, 2006

Governor Bob Riley
President

MEMORANDUM

Randy McKinney
District I
President Pro Tem

TO: County and City Superintendents

Betty Peters
District II

FROM: Joseph B. Morton
State Superintendent of Education

Stephanie W. Bell
District III

RE: Alabama Administrative Code (AAC), Rule 290-040-040-.02, Certain Teaching Techniques

Dr. Ethel H. Hall
District IV
Vice President
Emerita

From time to time it is necessary to review programs offered in local schools throughout Alabama by local boards of education and ascertain if they conflict with existing AAC rules and regulations. I know each of you do an excellent job of monitoring programs in your local schools regarding AAC compliance.

Ella B. Bell
District V

I call to your attention that some school systems may be considering offering yoga as part of a community education program that occurs after school hours but on school campuses. In reviewing the current AAC Rule 290-040-040-.02, it appears that offering yoga could be a violation of the AAC, even if it is offered after school to existing public school students under the authority of a local board of education through a local board-operated community education program.

David F. Byers, Jr.
District VI

Our best advice and guidance from the Department of Education is that yoga not be offered during regular school hours or after regular school hours to public school students on a public school campus in Alabama.

Sandra Ray
District VII
Vice President

Dr. Mary Jane Caylor
District VIII

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Joseph B. Morton
Secretary and
Executive Officer

JBM:BAD
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