

## **Policy on Religious Non-Discrimination, Religious Accommodation, and Equal Access to School Facilities**

Adopted: November 10, 2011

### **I. General Statement**

As a public charter school in the state of Minnesota, Cannon River STEM School is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. In accordance with state law and school board policy, Cannon River STEM School does not discriminate against any student on the basis of religion or creed.

Cannon River STEM School is not affiliated with a nonpublic sectarian school or religious institution. It leases its school facility from a sectarian organization (Shattuck-Saint Mary School) as allowed by state statute.

### **II. Release for Religious Instruction**

Cannon River STEM School will grant a release to a student enrolled in the school if it is the wish of the parent, guardian, or other person having control of the child, that the child attend for a period or periods not exceeding in the aggregate three hours in any week, a school for religious instruction conducted and maintained by some church, or association of churches, or any Sunday school association incorporated under the laws of this state, or any auxiliary thereof. This school for religious instruction must be conducted and maintained in a place other than a public school building, and it must not, in whole or in part, be conducted and maintained at public expense. However, a child may be absent from school on such days as the child attends upon instruction according to the ordinances of some church.

### **III. Use of School Facilities**

Should Cannon River STEM School decide to make its facilities available to any nonstudent group as a meeting place before or after the official school day:

1. It shall offer use of the school facilities on an equal and nondiscriminatory basis without regard to the content of the requested meeting;
2. It may charge a rental or use fee so long as such rental or use fee is required for any meeting requested by any nonstudent on an equal and nondiscriminatory basis without regard to the content of the requested meeting;

3. It may prohibit continued use of the school as a meeting place to any nonstudent if there is particularized evidence to show that the nonstudent user has and will continue to cause disruption or violence to the ordinary operation of the school.

### ***References***

#### **Minnesota Statute.**

124d.10 subd. 8d (nonsectarian nature of charter school); 124d.10 subd. 17 (leasing from a sectarian organization); 120a.22 subd. 12.3 (release for religious instruction).

#### **United States Supreme Court decisions.**

Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District, 113 S. Ct. 2141 (1993) (equal access to school facilities by religious organizations); Fairfax Covenant Church v. Fairfax County School Board, 811 F. Supp. 1137 (E.D. Va. 1993) (equal rental rates for organizations using school facilities).

#### **Cannon River STEM School Board Policy**

Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Policy.