

Board of Education Meeting
 Questions and Answers
 2015-2016

Date of Meeting	Subject	Question/Information Provided
August 20, 2015	School Prayer	<p>According to guidance provided by the NJ DOE –</p> <p>"...the First Amendment forbids religious activity that is sponsored by the government but protects religious activity that is initiated by private individuals" such as students. Therefore, "[a]mong other things, students may read their Bibles or other scriptures, say grace before meals, and pray or study religious materials with fellow students during recess, the lunch hour, or other non-instructional time to the same extent that they may engage in nonreligious activities." Public schools should not be hostile to the religious rights of their students and their families.</p> <p>At the same time, school officials may not "compel students to participate in prayer or other religious activities." Nor may teachers, school administrators and other school employees, when acting in their official capacities as representatives of the state, encourage or discourage prayer, or participate in such activities with students.</p>