Policy on Separation of Church and State 3-14-2016

Policy Type: **Executive Limitations**Policy Title: **Church and State**Adopted: June 2016Amended:

The Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock is committed to following the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that the First Amendment requires public school officials to be neutral in their treatment of religion, showing neither favoritism toward nor hostility against religious expression such as prayer.

In accordance with the First Amendment, the Principal will not:

1.      Allow discrimination on the basis of religious belief and/or expression among students, staff, families and/or other community members to the extent possible given the Principal’s authority.

2.      Allow a board member, administrator, teacher or other staff member to offer a prayer, hold a convening that is religious in purpose, and/or make a religious statement of any kind while acting in his/her capacity as an official of the school.

3. Prevent a member of the school community, including staff member, board member, parent, student and/or volunteer, from acting as a private individual to offer a prayer or hold a religious activity so long as that activity is attended voluntarily and it is evident that the individuals involved are not acting in any capacity that is endorsed by the school.

4.      Deny a member of the school community, including staff member, board member, parent, student and/or volunteer, the ability to pray or to engage in open religious expression on school grounds if that expression does not originate as a school-planned or sponsored activity or convening.

5.      Prevent a staff member from appealing a grievance in conjunction with this policy to the Board of Directors when the staff member has exhausted internal grievance procedures.

6.      Fail to acquaint staff members with their rights under this policy.

These statements cannot be construed to condone behaviors that are illegal or in breach of school policies even if those behaviors are justified as religious in origin or nature.

MONITORING: Annually