

Board of Trustees

1 AP 2300 INVOCATIONS AT BOARD MEETINGS

2 Reference:

3 Town of Greece v. Galloway (2014) 134 S. Ct. 1811

4 The following procedures have been established to direct the form and content of
5 invocations at board meetings.

6 1. Shortly after the opening gavel that officially begins the meeting, the Board
7 President or presiding officer shall introduce the invitational speaker and invite
8 only those persons who wish to do so to stand for those observances.

9 2. No member of the Board or employee shall direct any person to participate in any
10 invocation or prayer that is offered; make public note of a person's presence or
11 absence, attention or inattention during the invocation; or indicate that decisions
12 of the Board will in any way be influenced by a person's acquiescence in the prayer
13 opportunity.

14 3. The invocation shall be limited to two (2) minutes.

15 4. The Board of Trustees may, from time to time, replace an invocation with a moment
16 of silence or a brief inspirational message.

17 5. The content of the invocation or message, or in the case of a moment of silence,
18 any introductory remarks by the selected speaker leading up to it, shall be
19 prepared by the selected speaker as his/her/their personal remarks, shall not be
20 monitored or otherwise reviewed by the Board of Trustees or college employees,
21 and do not represent the views of the district.

22 6. The person selected to deliver the invocation shall be informed that the opportunity
23 to speak at a District or college event must not be exploited to proselytize or
24 advance any one, or to disparage any other, faith or belief.

25 7. Respondents to the invitation shall be scheduled during regular meetings by
26 rotating through each trustee area. If there are no requests from a trustee area,
27 the schedule will be on a first-come, first-served, or other random basis to deliver
28 the prayers.

29 8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that a variety of eligible
30 invitational speakers are scheduled for Board meetings. In any event, no
31 invitational speaker shall be scheduled to offer a prayer at consecutive meetings
32 of the Board, or at more than two (2) Board meetings during any calendar year.

33 9. If the selected invitational speaker does not appear at the scheduled meeting, the
34 Board President may ask for a volunteer to deliver the invocation.

35 10. No invitational speaker shall receive compensation for his/her/their service.

36 The following language shall be sent to religious leaders inviting them to lead an
37 invocation:

38 Dear religious leader,

39 The Cerritos College Board of Trustees makes it a policy to invite individuals to
40 voluntarily offer a prayer before the beginning of its meetings, for the benefit and
41 blessing of the Board of Trustees. As the leader of one of the religious
42 congregations with an established presence in the local community, you are
43 eligible to offer this important service at an upcoming meeting of the Board of
44 Trustees.

45 If you are willing to assist the Board of Trustees in this regard, please send a written
46 reply at your earliest convenience to the President's Office at the address included
47 on this letterhead. This opportunity is scheduled on a first-come, first-serve, or
48 other random basis. Board meetings are generally scheduled on the first and third
49 Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. If you have a preference among the
50 dates, please state that request in your written reply.

51 This opportunity is voluntary, and you are free to offer the invocation according to
52 the dictates of your own conscience. To maintain a spirit of respect, the Board of
53 Trustees requests that the prayer opportunity not be exploited as an effort to
54 convert others to the particular faith of the invitational speaker, nor to disparage
55 any faith or belief different from that of the invitational speaker.

56 Attached is a copy of Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2300 Invocations
57 at Board Meetings.

58 Office of Primary Responsibility: President/Superintendent

Date Approved: December 9, 2015

Dates Reviewed: October 17, 2018; November 15, 2021