

Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom

The District shall offer courses of study which will afford learning experiences appropriate to the level of student understanding. The instructional program shall respect the right of students to face issues, to have free access to information, to study under teachers in situations free from prejudice, and to form, hold, and express their own opinions without personal prejudice or discrimination.

Teachers shall guide discussions and procedures with thoroughness and objectivity to acquaint students with the need to recognize opposing viewpoints, importance of fact, value of good judgment, and the virtue of respect for conflicting opinions.

The Board encourages and supports the concept of academic free dom, recognizing it as a necessary condi tion to aid in maintaining an environ ment conducive to learning and the free exchange of ideas and information.

In the study or discussion of controversial issues or mate rials, however, the Board directs the teaching staff to take into account the following criteria:

1. relative maturity of students;
2. District philosophy of education;
3. community standards, morals, and values;
4. the necessity for a balanced presentation; and
5. the necessity to seek prior administrative counsel and guid ance in such mat ters.

Legal Reference: Article X, Sec. 8, Montana Constitution - School district trustees
20-3-324(16) and (17), MCA Powers and duties

Policy History:

Adopted on: June 28, 2004

Revised on: