

INSTRUCTION

2330

Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom

The District will offer courses of study which will afford learning experiences appropriate to levels of student understanding. The instructional program respects 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 will guide discussions and procedures with thoroughness and objectivity to acquaint students with the need to recognize various points of view, importance of fact, value of good judgment, and the virtue of respect for conflicting opinions.

The Board encourages and supports the concept of academic freedom, recognizing it as a necessary condition to aid in maintaining an environment conducive to learning and to the free exchange of ideas and information.

In a study or discussion of controversial issues or materials, however, the Board directs 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. Necessity for a balanced presentation; and
5. Necessity to seek administrative counsel and guidance in such matters.

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: April 2001

Reviewed on: February 2006

Reviewed on: December 2009

Reviewed on: January 2011