

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

A major goal of education in a free society is to develop persons who can think critical, understand their culture, live compassionately with others, make sound decisions, and live with the consequences of their judgment. Public education in a pluralistic society must strive to present as objectively as possible varied events, activities, and perceptions reflected in history, literature, and every other source of mankind's thought and expression. Because points of view differ and biases exist, students must have access to materials that express this diversity of perspective.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to make certain that such access to materials presenting all sides of a situation is available and discussed. However, teachers must take into account the age and relative maturity of their students and the need for guidance and help in studying issues and arriving at balanced views. All instruction conforms to state academic content standards and adopted courses of study.

The right of teachers to teach certain subjects or to employ certain teaching methods may be restricted by the board of education where such subjects or methods are deemed by the board and/or district administrators to be educationally unsound, inappropriate for the instruction must conform to state academic content standards and the district's adopted courses of study. The right to free speech protected by the First Amendment does not extend to the in-class curricular speech of teachers made pursuant to their official duties. Accordingly, teacher speech in the classroom may be subject to reasonable controls as to appropriateness.

The principle of academic freedom presupposes intellectual honesty on the part of the person who exercises it, that they can and will discriminate between facts bearing on an issue and personal opinion,. In expressing a personal opinion, a teacher will make it known to students that the view is his own and will not attempt to bring students to a commitment to that personal viewpoint.

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CROSS REF.: AC, nondiscrimination
EDE, Computer/Online Services (Acceptable Use and Internet Safety)
INB Teaching about Controversial Issues
JB, Equal Education Opprotunities