



6.20.011-AD Academic Freedom in the Instructional Program

I. General

- (1) The policy of the Board regarding academic freedom in the instructional program should be studied carefully by all administrators and teachers so that its intent is clearly understood.
- (2) In the final analysis, policies are effective only to the extent that they determine behavior in the schools. Each school administrator, with the assistance of his/her faculty, has the responsibility for interpreting the policy and establishing procedures, which are consistent with it, both in spirit and in substance.
- (3) The teacher's colleagues at grade level(s) in the elementary school and in the subject field at the secondary level shall provide a panel for the evaluation of other teachers' professional judgments when differences of opinion arise about instructional materials or outside speakers.
- (4) This directive consists of premises and guidelines which are intended to assist the staff in interpreting the Board policy. Procedures are included where necessary to ensure orderly process. Should a teacher feel that his/her academic freedom has been abridged, he/she is encouraged to follow the district's grievance procedure.

II. Teaching About Controversial Issues

- (1) Teachers are free to teach about controversial issues that fall within the areas they are employed to teach.
- (2) Discussion of controversial issues will help students learn to analyze problems, gather and sort facts, use discrimination in assessing facts and opinions, and draw informed conclusions.
- (3) The following questions will be helpful to the teacher when teaching about controversial issues:
 - (a) Is the issue pertinent to the objectives of the course?
 - (b) Will the issue interest and stimulate the students?
 - (c) Do the students have the intellectual and emotional maturity to deal with the issue?
 - (d) Have procedures for exploring the issue been established?

- (e) Are adequate materials available for exploration and examination of the issue?
- (f) Will the speakers or materials contribute to the objectives of the course?
- (g) Has a free exchange of ideas and conflicting views been provided for?
- (h) If I, the teacher, have stated my own opinions and beliefs, have I clearly identified them as my own?
- (i) Do I, the teacher, have an adequate background to deal with this issue and/or is this issue relevant to my professional role?

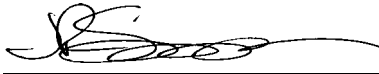
III. Use of Resource Speakers

- (1) There are many resource people in the community who can contribute to the enrichment of classroom presentations.
- (2) Teachers are encouraged to use, at their discretion, in their classroom, resource people from the community at large.
- (3) The following questions will be helpful for the teacher when planning for resource speakers:
 - (a) Is the speaker knowledgeable about his/her subject?
 - (b) Is the speaker able to present his/her material at a level that can be understood by my students?
 - (c) Has the speaker been informed of the role he/she is expected to play in the classroom setting?
 - (d) Will the speaker interest and stimulate the students?
 - (e) Have the students been prepared for the kind of position and issue that the speaker will present?
 - (f) How will other points of view be provided for?
 - (g) Should time be allowed for students to question the speaker?
 - (h) Do I have perspective on the issue to be presented by the resource speaker?
 - (i) Is what the speaker has to contribute pertinent to the achievement of the objectives of the course?
- (4) The above premises and guidelines in will also be useful when considering resource speakers for school assemblies during school hours or for club meetings and other school-sponsored meetings held in the school after regular school hours.

- (5) If a teacher intends to invite a speaker who is generally recognized to be controversial, notice shall be given to the principal prior to extending the invitation. In other cases, a teacher who invites any resource speaker to appear before his/her class shall give notice of the invitation to the principal prior to the date of the scheduled appearance in order that the principal may exercise judgment concerning the effect of the speaker on all aspects of the school program, which come within his/her responsibility.

Policy Implemented: 6.20.010-P

History: Adpt. 6/71; Amd 9/01/02. Renumbered 6.20.020-AD. Incorporates material from 6.20.020-AD, 6.20.030-AD and 6.20.040-AD

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Approved:	
	<u>9/01/02</u>
_____ Superintendent	_____ Date