

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

A major goal of education in a free society is to develop persons who can think critically, 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 age and/or grade appropriate materials which express this diversity of perspective.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to make certain that such access to materials presenting various sides of an issue is available; however, teachers must take into account the relative maturity of their students and the need for guidance and help in studying issues and arriving at balanced views. All instruction will conform to adopted courses of study.

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

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CROSS REF.: INB, Teaching About Controversial Issues