Billings School District 2

INSTRUCTION

Academic Freedom and Controversial Issues

Teachers will implement the professional curriculum adopted by the Board under the supervision of the building principal. The District offers courses of study that will afford learning experiences appropriate to levels of student maturity and 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 (i.e. grading practices, participation, access to resources, etc.).

Teachers shall guide discussions and procedures with neutrality, 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, the Board directs teaching staff to take into account the following criteria:

1. relative age and maturity of students,
2. district philosophy of education,
3. specific connection to classroom curriculum,
4. community standards, morals, and values,
5. necessity for a balanced presentation, and
6. necessity to seek administrative counsel and guidance in such matters.

In addition, staff are directed to implement within the guidelines of all other applicable policies and laws.

Cross References: Policy 2310 Instructional Resources and Textbook Adoption
Policy 2311 Challenges to Educational Material
Policy 2312 Copyright

Legal References: Article X, Sec. 8, Montana Constitution - School district trustees
§ 20-3-324(17), MCA Powers and duties
10.55.1001, et seq. Montana Program Area and Program Delivery Standards
Add reference to Child Internet Protection (CIPA)

Policy History:
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