

Hot Springs School District	Policy: IB
Policy Manual	

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom may be defined as the right of qualified scholars in their own field of expertise to pursue the search for truth in its many forms, and to make public their methods and findings. It is the right of qualified teachers to encourage freedom of discussion of controversial questions in the classroom, and to develop in students a love of knowledge and a desire to search for truth. Teachers should keep in mind academic freedom is not a guaranteed political right, but rather a necessary condition for the successful practice of the academic profession in a free society.

The Board believes academic freedom also carries with it academic responsibility, which is determined by the basic ideals, goals, and institutions of the local community as they are expressed in the goals and objectives of the School District.

Therefore the Board expects:

- all classroom studies will be curriculum-related, and will be presented factually, objectively, and impartially.
- teachers will create and maintain an atmosphere of open-mindedness and tolerance.
- teachers will not attempt directly or indirectly to limit or control the students' judgment concerning any issue, but will make certain full and fair consideration is given to the subject and facts are carefully examined as to their accuracy and interpretation.

While the Board intends to protect teachers from any undue restraint that interferes with their classroom duties, the ultimate responsibility for determining curriculum, textbooks, and teaching methods must rest with the Board and be in conjunction with the State standards. It also expects when controversial issues are presented, the maturity and intellectual grasp of students will be taken into account.

Legal References:

Cross References: INB, Teaching About Controversial Issues

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