

Section 3: INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Political Activities and Academic Freedom

The Board of Education believes students should have an opportunity to reach their own decisions and beliefs about conflicting points of view, and that instruction, curriculum and learning spaces should support this belief.

Political Activities

Political candidates, party representatives, and other candidates for elective office shall not be allowed to campaign on district property during the school day. They may be permitted to meet in district buildings before or after the student day, provided they meet guidelines for use of district facilities and provided the meeting is held in a designated location and attendance is voluntary.

Political campaign material, including material supporting or opposing candidates or ballot issues, shall not be distributed on District property during the school day and shall not be placed in District staff members' mailboxes. Employees of the Dubuque Community School District may not wear campaign paraphernalia in the classroom (this includes school vehicles, buses, and on any DCSD property).

Political campaign material, including posters and paraphernalia, may be displayed in a classroom only when directly tied to instruction relating to adopted curriculum standards. Any issue should be fairly presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom to the end that individual students may recognize the validity of other points of view but can learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the factual bases underlying the controversy.

Political officeholders or candidates may be engaged as resource persons for instructional purposes with the approval of the building administrator, in accordance with Policy 6203. Every effort shall be made, however, to structure the presentation or discussion so that it is either nonpartisan in nature or allows opportunity for the representation of differing points of view.

The district shall not expend any funds for partisan political activities.

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the opportunity of licensed employees and students to study, investigate, present, interpret, and discuss facts and ideas relevant to the subject matter of the classroom and appropriate to the maturity and intellectual and emotional capacities of the students.

In no case may a teacher express an opinion that discriminates against someone on the basis of race,

creed, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, disability, or socioeconomic status in our educational programs, activities, political ideology or employment practices. It is the responsibility of the teacher to refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or biased positions in the classroom or through teaching methods. Students must be allowed to reach their own conclusions independently.

A controversial issue is a topic of significant academic inquiry about which substantial groups of citizens of this community, this state or this nation hold sincere, conflicting points of view.

It is the belief of the board that controversial issues should be equitably presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom so that students may recognize the validity of other points of view but can also learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the facts related to the controversy. This includes instruction and the setup of learning spaces.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to present full and fair opportunity and means for students to study, consider and discuss all sides of controversial issues including, but not limited to, political philosophies.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to protect the right of the student to study pertinent controversial issues and to allow the student to express personal opinions without jeopardizing the student's relationship with the teacher.

The board encourages full discussion of controversial issues in a spirit of academic freedom that shows students that they have the right to disagree with the opinions of others but that they also have the responsibility to base the disagreement on facts and to respect the right of others to hold conflicting opinions.

It is the responsibility of the building administrator to ensure academic freedom is allowed but not abused in the classroom.

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