

Certificated Personnel

Academic Freedom

The Orange Unified School District seeks to educate young people in the democratic tradition, to foster a recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and to instill appreciation of the values of individual personality. It is recognized that these democratic values can best be transmitted in an atmosphere which is free and open for inquiry and learning.

Teachers are expected to follow the adopted curriculum of the District. Teachers shall have the right and responsibility to present material concerning facts and concepts relating to this curriculum as long as the material is approached in an impartial and unprejudiced manner and in accordance with District policies and administrative regulations.

The Board recognizes that teachers have those constitutional rights accorded all citizens, including, but not limited to, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and the right of due process.

In addition to following the adopted curriculum of the District, teachers are also expected to follow the content standards as adopted by the California State Board of Education.

Intent

The Board believes that the existence and progress of a democratic society demands that there be freedom of teaching the curriculum as approved by the Board and freedom of learning in schools. The Board accepts as one of its major responsibilities the protections of these freedoms for students, teachers, and others directly concerned with the school program.

The Board has the responsibility to ensure that the school fulfills its obligations to society at the local, state, and national levels. The obligation in behalf of academic freedom requires that the Board cooperate with educational personnel and with the community in a judicious and open-minded manner in policies and decisions for the preservation of that freedom.

The proper role of the Board requires providing all possible support within the law to the teachers, administrators, and other staff members who are making use of their abilities and resources to maintain a climate of intellectual freedom, without license, in the schools.

Successful action in matters of academic freedom depends greatly upon the Board's ability to see the true relationship between the total objectives of the educational program and the values of the academic freedom. Under this criterion, the Board will work with its administration for a practical and defensible balance in this relationship and will attempt to so interpret it to the community.

Criteria

Basis for judgment in matters pertaining to academic freedom within the District shall be:

BP 4119.24/4319.24(b)

1. The welfare of students, individually and collectively, in the present and for the future.
2. The intellectual maturity of the students.
3. The standards and beliefs of the majority of the citizens in the community.
4. The security and dignity of teachers, administrators and other employees.
5. The status of the problem or issue within the framework of law.
6. In the case of instructional materials, the informative, literary and general cultural values which may assist students in intellectual growth and habits of critical thought.
7. Informed opinion in policy statements regarding academic freedom available from organizations of teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, Board members and other citizens with special interest in public education.

In cases of alleged offense, the Board will concern itself with the maintenance of fair hearing and appeal procedures. The Board will collaborate with the governmental structure, the State Board of Education and the courts to ensure just protection of the responsible exercise of academic freedom.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

51500 Prohibited instruction or activity (re adverse reflection upon persons because of race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry)

51501 Prohibited means of instruction

51510 Prohibited study or supplemental materials

51511 Religious matters properly included in courses of study

51512 Prohibited use of electronic listening or recording device; penalties

51530 Prohibition and definition (re advocating or teaching communism with the intent to indoctrinate, etc.)

ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Orange, California

Adopted: (7-88 11-93 6-06 4-12) 10-19