

ARTICLE XXII -- ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Section 1. Role of the Board

The Board acknowledges that a free society is dependent upon the education afforded its people and, therefore, affirms the right of teachers to freely pursue truth and knowledge. Further, the Board has the authority to establish educational policy and the guidelines for utilization of instructional materials of any nature in classroom presentation.

In establishing said guidelines, the Board shall provide for and consider: course content; maturity level of students; needs and abilities of students; and teacher judgment.

Section 2. Academic Freedom Guidelines

Teachers shall be guaranteed freedom in classroom presentations and discussions and may introduce political, religious, or other controversial material whenever, in teachers' professional judgment, it is appropriate to the instructional objectives and the age level of the students.

Teachers shall be guaranteed freedom of choice and flexibility with respect to teaching styles and methodology to be used in the instruction of children within Board objectives. Where a principal has substantiated a need for an improved teaching style and methodology, through personal conferences and classroom observations, the teacher shall develop a methodology and teaching style more suitable for the attainment of Board objectives.

In performing their teaching function, teachers shall be guaranteed freedom in expressing their personal opinions on all matters relevant to the course content provided, however, when doing so, they will indicate they are expressing personal opinions.

Teachers shall not be censored or restrained in the performance of their teaching functions on the grounds that the material discussed and/or opinions expressed are distasteful or embarrassing to those in authority.

Nothing in this Article shall exempt teachers from their duties, as described in Florida Statutes.