

522.6 FREEDOM OF SPEECH

School district personnel are expected to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of expression. The Board recognizes that no freedom is absolute, and that in this case restrictions come from at least three sources:

Legal

Governing bodies can within frequently defined limits restrict freedom of speech, as for example within the "clear and present danger" doctrine of the United States Supreme Court. Differences of opinion on what constitutes acceptable regulation of freedom of speech in this sector may find solution only by legal action.

Societal

Communities vary in what they will tolerate in classroom discussion. Limits of such tolerance change with time and place. Differences of opinion between staff and community feelings may not so much be a matter for court adjudication as for tolerance on the part of each contender for the other's position.

Professional

Staff members and their organizations must themselves decide what effect insisting on exercising freedom of speech, or accepting some degree of regulation thereof, will have on their role as WRPS employees, and their ultimate effectiveness in the education process.

The Board requests that any differences of opinion about exercise or abridgement of freedom of speech within or among members of the Board, staff, and especially instructional personnel be reviewed by all parties concerned in the light of the above three factors.

CROSS REF.: 333, Parent Rights in the Curriculum
 385, Teaching about Controversial Issues
 386, Teaching about Religion

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