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3 **INSTRUCTION**

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5 Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom

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7 The District will offer courses of study which will afford learning experiences appropriate to
8 levels of student understanding. The instructional program respects the right of students to face
9 issues, to have free access to information, to study under teachers in situations free from
10 prejudice, and to form, hold, and express their own opinions without personal prejudice or
11 discrimination.

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13 Teachers will guide discussions and procedures with thoroughness and objectivity to acquaint
14 students with the need to recognize various points of view, importance of fact, value of good
15 judgment, and the virtue of respect for conflicting opinions.

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17 The Board encourages and supports the concept of academic freedom, recognizing it as a
18 necessary condition to aid in maintaining an environment conducive to learning and to the free
19 exchange of ideas and information.

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21 In a study or discussion of controversial issues or materials, however, the Board directs teaching
22 staff to take into account the following criteria:

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24 1. Relative maturity of students;
25 2. District philosophy of education;
26 3. Community standards, morals, and values;
27 4. Necessity for a balanced presentation; and
28 5. Necessity to seek administrative counsel and guidance in such matters.
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32 Legal Reference: Article X, Sec. 8, Montana Constitution - School district trustees
33 § 20-3-324(16) and (17), MCA Powers and duties
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35 Policy History:

36 Adopted on:

37 Reviewed on: 2/25/08

38 Revised on: Fall 2003