

## POSITIONS AND POLICIES ON EDUCATION

### Controversial Issues

FILE CODE

6144

#### Academic Freedom

- A. **The NJSBA believes** in the fundamental American right of freedom of speech, but also recognizes the need for local school district control over matters of particular sensitivity to individual school district communities. Because of the differing maturity levels of students at the various grade levels, care must be taken to ensure the appropriateness of instructional materials used in the classroom at all grade levels and in all subject areas.
- B. **The NJSBA believes** that classroom presentations on any controversial matter should include a review of diverse points of view, and that any expression of personal opinion should be so identified. NJSBA further believes that there is a need for greater academic freedom for teachers at the public secondary level (9-12) than at the public elementary level (preK-8).
- C. **The NJSBA believes** that the local board of education should serve as the final authority in determining the appropriateness of selected instructional materials at any grade level and in all subject areas, recognizing that there may be parental/community objections to any such material. *[Authority: BD 3/61, BD 1/71, BD 12/90, DA 11/97-SR, DA 11/02-SR, DA 11/07-SR, DA 11/12-SR, DA 11/17-SR]*

Key Words: academic freedom, freedom of speech, controversial