Teton School District No. 401

INSTRUCTION **2341**

Speakers in the Classroom and at School Functions

The Board encourages the use of outside speakers when the speaker's program is educationally sound, consistent with the curriculum, and follows District policies and procedures.

All speakers must be invited with the school principal's approval. If the subject is controversial the principal may also decide to engage speakers for both sides of the issue(s). In no instance shall a speaker who is known to advocate unconstitutional or illegal acts or procedures be permitted to address the students. Parents will be given the option to remove their student from certain discussions, and an alternative assignment will be given if the speaker is to address a classroom.

Controversial Speakers

The Board recognizes that visiting speakers may be of specific persuasions and that their topics may be controversial. If they are prohibited from speaking because of their points of view, academic freedom is endangered. Students need to examine issues upon which there is disagreement and to practice analyzing problems, gathering and organizing facts, discriminating between facts and opinions, discussing differing viewpoints and drawing tentative conclusions. The Board also recognizes that many topics are not suitable for younger or less mature students. When correctly handled, the use of controversial speakers becomes an invaluable component in accomplishing the goals of citizenship education. However, this places a serious responsibility on the professional staff members to correctly structure the learning situation involving a speaker.

Legal Reference: I.C. § 33-512 Governance of schools

Policy History:
Adopted on: August 10, 2009
Revised on: July 9, 2012