

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

It is expected that instructional personnel of the Rice Lake Area School District may exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of expression. The Board of Education recognizes that no freedom is absolute and that restrictions come from at least three sources:

## 1. LEGAL

Governing bodies can, within frequently defined limits, restrict freedom of speech; 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 area may find solution only by legal action.

## 2. SOCIETAL

Communities vary in what they will tolerate in classroom discussion. Limits of such tolerance change with time and place. Differences of opinion among district staff members should be expected and best handled with respectful discussion, which the district encourages.

## 3. PROFESSIONAL

Staff members should take into account what effect insisting on exercising freedom of speech, versus accepting some degree of regulation thereof, will have on their role as professionals, and on their ultimate effectiveness in the education process.

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

Legal Ref: U.S. Constitution  
Cross Ref: 524.1 Staff Involvement in Political Activities  
Adopted: 12/18/78  
Revised: 04/08/96  
01/08/07  
11/27/23