



## **SECTION V: EMPLOYEES**

## **POLICY 5185**

### **SPEECH BY EMPLOYEES IN THE CLASSROOM**

Broken Arrow Public Schools recognizes that its teachers are a diverse group of professionals with differing viewpoints on matters of interest to the community, whether for social, political, or other reasons. The District also recognizes that when performing official duties, teachers are no longer acting as private citizens but rather in their capacity as public employees. In order to best adhere to the District's non-discrimination policy, provide a safe environment for all, protect instructional time, and help ensure there is not a disruption to the educational process, all school sites shall adhere to the following requirements:

Because of the position of trust and authority that teachers hold and the impressionable young minds with which they interact, the District reserves the right to restrict teachers from expressing views of a personal nature, political or otherwise, in their classrooms. Accordingly, the District does not permit displays, symbols, and flags in the classroom that are related to the personal beliefs of a teacher and associated with a singular group, matters of public concern, or related to organizations or groups based on race, gender, sexual preference, sexual identification, political affiliation, personal hobbies, heritage/ethnicity, memberships, and religion. Displays, symbols, and flags in the classroom, like discussions within the structured academic day, need to be standard-based and driven based upon the content of the teaching job description.

This policy is not to be interpreted as preventing displays, symbols, and flags in the classroom associated with the United States of America, the State of Oklahoma, the City of Broken Arrow, or the District. Furthermore, this policy does not prevent District-approved student led clubs or groups from displaying flags/symbols/signs associated with that club or group during voluntary meetings and organized events.

One or more violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary actions, including suspension and/or dismissal.

Source: *Broken Arrow Board of Education policy adoption, December 6, 2021.*