

## **INCIDENTS SUPPRESSING STUDENT EXPRESSION IN NEBRASKA**

### Summary

- A district superintendent changed not only his answers to student newspaper staff questions, but also changed their questions to him, before allowing publication of an article on teacher pay in the student newspaper.  
October, 2009. Sources: First person report; Student Press Law Center; iHigh.com.
- A high school principal refused to allow the student newspaper to publish an editorial that encourages students to attend school board meetings.  
October, 2009. Sources: First person report; Student Press Law Center; iHigh.com.
- Community college officials cancelled the screening of a documentary film about Whiteclay, asserting that the film was “too political” to be shown to students at a college campus.  
March, 2009. Sources: Omaha World-Herald; first person report.
- Students were suspended from school for wearing memorial T-shirts honoring a student who died tragically.  
August, 2008. Sources: Omaha World-Herald; KETV.com; ACLU Nebraska; Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression.
- A student was suspended from school for handing out cards explaining why he was remaining silent for the day other than to answer teachers in the classroom.  
April, 2008. Source: ACLU Nebraska News.
- A high school principal stopped the production of the annual spring school play after a stepparent complained about historically accurate aspects of the play. The principal also forbade production of the play off-campus.  
February, 2008. Source: Omaha World-Herald.
- A journalism teacher of 20 years chose to retire in the face of repeated student newspaper censorship incidents.  
January, 2008. Source: First person report.
- A school principal abruptly removed a teacher from her duties as student newspaper advisor and journalism instructor, even after two years of her compliance with strict prior review by the principal.  
June, 2007. Source: First person report.
- A high school principal was suspended for supporting journalism students and their advisor when they tackled a controversial subject.  
April, 2007. Sources: Omaha World-Herald; First person report.
- A drama teacher lost her position after selecting a highly-acclaimed historical play for the school’s production.  
February, 2006. Source: First person report.
- A high school journalism advisor resigned rather than accept reassignment after a student’s political cartoon in the student newspaper upset the principal.  
February, 2006. Source: First person report.

- A college newspaper advisor was fired for permitting articles in the student newspaper critical of the administration and the college.  
April, 2005. Source: First person report.
- School library filters denied students access to legitimate educational research articles that appear on approved websites.  
April, 2005. Source: First person report.
- A high school student was threatened with suspension for distributing fliers on campus that opposed the Iraq war.  
Spring, 2005. Source: ACLU Nebraska.
- High school students were told not to discuss elections or politics in class.  
Fall, 2004. Source: First person report.
- University administrators limited campus “free speech” to a small fountain area.  
September, 2004. Sources: Daily Nebraskan; Lincoln Journal Star.
- Four high school students were suspended for placing political posters of a white African-American student in the school.  
February, 2004. Sources: KETV.com; Omaha World-Herald; First person report.
- A teacher gave up sponsorship of the student newspaper in order to keep his teaching job.  
2004. Source: Retired teacher report.
- A high school principal censored an edition of the student newspaper that included a satirical article that poked fun at “life skills” class.  
October, 2003. Source: First person report.
- A nationally-recognized student newspaper was threatened with censorship for being too “real” in its investigative journalism.  
November, 2001. Sources: Omaha World-Herald; Society of Professional Journalists; First person report.
- High school administrators forced teachers and students into a blackout of communication with the outside world on September 11, 2001.  
September, 2001. Source: First person report.
- High school administrators told students they are not allowed to say “Merry Christmas” at school.  
December, 2000. Source: First person report.
- Two high school students were suspended for distributing an underground newspaper on campus.  
Fall, 2000. Sources: Omaha World-Herald; WOWT Channel 6; First person report.
- High school students were not allowed to hold an after-school Christian club on campus.  
1985-1990. Source: Westside Board of Education v. Mergens 496 U.S. 226 (1990).
- A student newspaper article was censored by the principal because it contained an analogy.  
Circa 1988. Source: Retired teacher report.