

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

The Board of Education believes that the consideration of controversial issues has a legitimate place in the instructional program of the schools.

Properly introduced and conducted, the consideration of such issues can help students learn to identify important issues, explore fully and fairly all sides of an issue, weigh carefully the values and factors involved, and develop techniques for formulating and evaluating positions.

For purposes of the policy, a controversial issue is a topic likely to arouse both support and opposition in the community.

The Board will permit the introduction and proper educational use of controversial issues provided that their use in the instructional program:

- A. is related to the instructional goals of the course of study and level of maturity of the students;
- B. does not tend to indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view;
- C. encourages open-mindedness and is conducted in a spirit of scholarly inquiry.

Controversial issues related to the program may be initiated by the students themselves provided they are presented in the ordinary course of classroom instruction and it is not disruptive to the educational setting.

Controversial issues may not be initiated by a source outside the schools unless prior approval has been given by the Superintendent.

When controversial issues have not been specified in the course of study, the Board will permit the instructional use of only those issues which have been approved by the Superintendent who shall report periodically such approval to the Board for their review.

The Board recognizes that a course of study or certain instructional materials may contain content and/or activities that some parents find objectionable. If after careful review of the program lessons and/or materials, a parent files a complaint in accordance with Board policy 9130 regarding either content or activities that conflict with his/her religious beliefs or value system, the school will honor a written request for his/her child to be excused from particular classes for specified reasons. The student, however, will not be excused from participating in the course or activities mandated by the State and will be provided alternative learning activities during times of parent requested absences.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines for dealing with controversial issues.

Adopted July 26, 2011