

2240 CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Purpose of Policy: The Board of Education organizes its Policy Manual in order that users can easily locate the policies and regulations.

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 this policy, a controversial issue is a topic subject to interpretation as obscene, profane, doctrinaire, or grossly inappropriate, each in relation to the level of maturity of the students.

The Board will permit the introduction and proper educational use of controversial issues provided that their use in the instructional program is approved in the appropriate course of study/curriculum guide.

When controversial issues have not been specified in the curriculum guide; the Board will permit the instructional use of only those issues which have been approved by the Superintendent and/or Building Principal. If teachers wish to supplement a course of study/curriculum guide with material that may be of a controversial nature, they should review the material with the Superintendent and/or Building Principal first.

The Board recognizes that some deviation from the assigned curriculum guide(s) is necessary in the free exchange of the classroom. However, the Board specifies for the guidance of the Superintendent/Building Principal and, through administrative directive, the guidance of the staff that any discussion of controversial issues in the classroom shall be conducted in an unprejudiced and dispassionate manner and shall not:

1. Disrupt the educational process;
2. Fail to match the maturity level of students;
3. Be unrelated to the goals of the Board and the appropriate curriculum guide; and
4. Present any one opinion as definitive.

In the discussion of any issue, a teacher may express a personal opinion, but shall identify it as such, and must not express such an opinion for the purpose of persuading students to his/her point of view.

Adopted: November 5, 2008