

## TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Controversial issues are topics of significant academic inquiry about which large groups of citizens of this community, this state, or this nation hold sincere, but conflicting point of view.

Teaching about controversial issues shall be fairly presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom so that students may recognize the validity of other points of view but can also learn to formulate their own opinions based upon objective, unbiased study, and discussion of the facts related to a controversial issue.

Teachers are responsible for presenting full and fair opportunity and means for students to study, consider, and discuss the various sides of controversial issues including, but not limited to, political philosophies.

Teachers are responsible for protecting the rights of students to study controversial issues within the limits of good taste, the maturity, intellectual, and emotional capabilities of the students. Students are encouraged to express personal opinions without jeopardizing his/her academic status with teachers.

Teachers shall not advocate partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind through any classroom or school device. However, teachers shall not be prohibited from expressing personal opinions as long as students are encouraged to reach their own decisions independently.

Teaching about controversial issues in a spirit of academic freedom shows students they have the right to disagree with the opinions of others but that they also have the responsibility to base any disagreement on facts while respecting the right of others that hold conflicting opinions.

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