

POLICY ————— **PEQUANNOCK TOWNSHIP**
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PROGRAM
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Controversial Issues

2240 – CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

One of the most valuable outcomes of a free educational system is the development of an ability to meet issues without prejudice and to withhold judgments while facts are being collected, assembled and analyzed.

Students should have the opportunity to find, collect, and assemble factual materials on the subject, interpret the data without prejudice, reconsider assumptions and claims, and reach their own conclusions.

To encourage students to search after truth and think for themselves, teachers should refrain from expressing personal views before and during the period of research and study. Criticism and the promotion of a cause within the classroom are inappropriate and unscholarly. The teacher's attitude should be one which is truth seeking, open-minded, and tolerant.

The presentation and discussion of controversial issues in the classroom will be conducted in an unprejudiced and dispassionate manner and can not be allowed to disrupt the educational process. In the discussion of any issue, a teacher may express a personal opinion, provided the expression is characterized as a personal opinion and does not attempt to persuade pupils to the teacher's point of view.

For purposes of this policy, a controversial issues is a topic:

- on which opposing points of view have been expressed by responsible and thoughtful persons.
- likely to arouse both support and opposition in the community.
- not expressly enumerated in the course guide as appropriate for the course of study.

The student may enjoy these privileges:

1. The right to study controversial issues of political, economics, or social significance.
2. The right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.
3. The right of access to all relevant information freely available in the school or public library.

Adopted: 11 November 1999

Revised and Adopted: 16 August 2010