

Controversial Issues

Controversial issues arising from classroom situations and subject matter may be discussed and explored in the classroom.

Controversial issues provide stimulation to learning by stirring intellectual excitement and thus are an integral part of the normal classroom environment. Free inquiry in a democratic society requires that controversial issues arising in the normal classroom situation be handled as a regular aspect of instruction and learning in such a way as not to inhibit the dignity, the personality, or the intellectuality of either the teacher or the students.

Controversial issues with respect to instruction in the public schools appear to present, in essence, a two-fold problem: first, the problem of academic freedom for both the teacher and the student; and second, the problem of technique or method employed in handling controversial issues in the classroom. For larger society, provision must be made so that teachers and students alike are free to exchange and develop ideas. In presenting any controversial issue, it is recommended that opposing views be presented.

Supplemental material used for instructional purposes such as books and other resource materials that in and of themselves may not be controversial, may be deemed so by certain segments of our community. In selecting such material for the classroom, teachers must consider the appropriateness of its use in a school setting. It is recommended that alternative materials and lessons be made available.

All individuals dealing with controversial topics and printed or visual materials which are thought of as controversial issues should be permitted or used only with the written consent of the principal.

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