

**1<sup>ST</sup> READING: 05/10/2023****2<sup>ND</sup> READING: 06/28/2023****ADOPTED: 06/28/2023**

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## **TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE ISSUES**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the BUUSD to provide students with a wide variety of topics and content to expose them to different perspectives and ways of thinking.

### **Teaching About Controversial and Sensitive Issues**

Controversial and sensitive issues are defined as those problems, subjects, or questions about which there are significant differences of opinion, for which there are no easy resolutions, and discussions of which generally create strong feelings among people. Although there may be disagreement over what the facts are and what they mean, subjects usually become controversial and sensitive because of the different values people use in applying the facts as known.

1. Controversial and sensitive issues shall be handled as they arise in the classroom and shall not be avoided in order to restrict or restrain the academic freedom, as defined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, between the teachers and board of school directors, of either the teacher or the student.
2. Teacher initiation of controversial and sensitive issues should have direct relevance to the topic being discussed.
3. In handling a controversial or sensitive issue, the teacher shall not suppress a student's view, value and/or belief on that issue as long as the expression of that view, value, or belief is not derogatory, malicious, or abusive toward other students' views.
4. Instructional materials should present differing sides of controversial and sensitive issues.
5. The purpose of classroom teaching methodologies shall be to present differing sides of controversial and sensitive issues so that teachers guide young citizens in the practices of critical discussion, thinking, and reading.
6. In the course of a student's education in the BUUSD, topics may be presented which could cause discomfort in light of a student's or families' personal beliefs. If this occurs, students and/or their parents/guardians may request an alternative experience. This request should be made to the student's teacher.