

Controversial Issues

The Board recognizes that differences of opinion may occur in classes where students are encouraged to seek understanding of facts and form opinions in conformance with them. It is probable, too, that these differences will be accentuated where free inquiry exists and if divergent views can be expressed and be subject to common scrutiny.

Furthermore, if the quality of learning in the schools is to be judged on its contribution to the development of a free person solving personal problems and cooperating in seeking solutions to the problems of a community in a free society, then students must be permitted to express such differences with all the resources which they may bring to bear. It also follows that ample resources representative of different views should be made available to students.

The teacher's role in these instances becomes that of a guide, aiding students in the process of objective inquiry and maintaining an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice. The teacher is entitled to express an informed opinion and should label it as such when discussing controversial topics.

The district believes that the student's freedom to express differing views and to defend a position is a requisite if the student is to acquire the skills of critical thinking and analysis which will be needed as an effective, productive citizen. It recognizes that such practices may bring controversial issues to the fore, and that, as a result, parents may become apprehensive. But the Board reaffirms that it wishes to extend to all students the right of freedom of inquiry.

The administration will review complaints from any persons who are not satisfied with the manner in which controversial issues are being treated. If a person believes the complaint has not been fairly considered by the administration, that person may ask for further review by the superintendent.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 336.067](#)

[OAR 581-022-1020](#)

[OAR 581-022-1910](#)

U.S. CONST. amend. I.

OR. CONST., art. I.

Cross Reference(s):

GBG - Staff Participation in Political Activities

IB - Freedom of Expression