

Studying Controversial Issues

Planning for Instruction about Controversial Issues

1. Before the presentation of an obviously controversial topic to students, the teachers will discuss with the principal:
 - a. Its appropriateness to the course;
 - b. Its appropriateness for the students' maturity level;
 - c. The approach to instruction;
 - d. The instructional materials to be used; and
 - e. The notification of parents.
2. Teachers will review related policies: Program Exemption (IGBHD), Instructional Materials Selection (IIA-AR) and Freedom of Expression (IB).

Facilitating Instruction about Controversial Issues

1. When a student initiates a controversial question and it does not meet the criteria of the policy, the teacher should first refer the student to his/her family, clergy or trusted adult for response; then meet with the student at another time, if necessary; or refer the student to appropriate school resources.
2. Student opinions should be handled with respect to create an environment of inquiry and freedom but the teacher must assume responsibility for making sure that classroom discussion is ultimately balanced during the course of study.