

Teaching about Controversial Issues

The Board of Education believes that when issues of a controversial nature are presented in the classroom, they shall be presented in a factual and unbiased manner.

Care should be taken to see that discussions of such topics are well prepared, meaningful, and presented appropriately, with tact, decorum, and good taste. Teachers are obligated to relate the facts from both sides of an issue and should clearly distinguish when what is said is an expression of personal opinion.

When discussing controversial issues the teacher shall take into consideration the significance and appropriateness of the issue; the pupils' maturity, knowledge and interest; and adequacy and availability of related materials or personnel; the time available for satisfactory study; and the customs and attitudes of the community. The teacher is expected to control the discussion at all times.

The Board of Education recognizes the possibility for misunderstanding or criticism about the teaching of controversial issues. The Superintendent shall implement a process whereby complaints by parents or other citizens may be heard and responded to in a fair and objective manner.

Controversial Speakers

Invitations to outside speakers who will present issues which may be controversial shall be approved by the building principal before the invitation is issued. The principal and teacher shall work cooperatively to see that students receive an appropriate balance of information. The ideas presented and the speaker invited to present them shall have a demonstrable relation to the instructional activity in which participating students are involved.

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 - Academic Freedom
IICB - Community Resource Persons