

Controversial Issues/Speakers

The Board seeks to educate young people in the democratic tradition, foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, understand controversy and diversity and inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Since our society is based on the free exchange of ideas and diversity of political and social thought, it shall be the policy of this district to encourage unbiased, unprejudiced and scientific study of controversial issues as they arise as part of school curriculum. A controversial issue may be defined as any topic or problem which society has debated or is debating on which there is honest disagreement. Such issues arise when different interpretations are given to a particular set of circumstances.

The basic goal in studying controversial issues is to allow students to develop techniques for considering such issues throughout life. Learning situations shall provide opportunities for the development of clear thinking, balanced judgment, intelligent choices, informed opinion, an ability to differentiate fact from opinion and an understanding of propaganda devices. Issues selected for study should be significant and of interest to the students and come within the range of the students' knowledge, maturity and competence.

Teachers are responsible for exercising judgment in selecting controversial issues of educational value for discussion.

Teachers should assist students to learn the processes used by the social scientist to identify, study and solve problems. Teachers shall avoid indoctrination in their own personal viewpoint and shall not attempt to control or limit the judgment of students. The selection of materials, guest speakers and classroom activities in general shall be done with studied impartiality for the purpose of fairly presenting all sides of an issue.

Issues, materials, speakers and classroom activities shall have a demonstrable relation to the curriculum in which students are involved. Principals are responsible for approval of issues, materials, speakers and classroom activities.

Principals are responsible for the administration of this policy under the guidance of procedures established 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

IIA - Instructional Resources/Instructional Materials

IB - Freedom of Expression