



Book	Board Policies
Section	I. Instruction
Title	Teaching about Controversial/Sensitive Issues
Code	IMB-R
Status	Active

1. Good teaching of subjects involving controversial issues requires particular skill and so far as possible only teachers of superior training and experience will be assigned subjects in which a large body of material deals with such issues.
2. The approach of the teacher to controversial topics must be impartial and objective.
3. Teachers will use the following criteria for determining the appropriateness of certain issues for consideration as part of the curriculum:
  - a. The treatment of the issue in question must be within the range, knowledge, maturity and competence of the students.
  - b. There should be study materials and other learning aids available from which a reasonable amount of data pertaining to all aspects of the issue should be obtained.
  - c. The consideration of the issue should require only as much time as is needed for satisfactory study of the issue by the class but sufficient time should be provided to cover the issue adequately.
  - d. The issue should be current, significant, real and important to the students and teacher. Significant issues are those which in general concern considerable numbers of people, are related to basic principles or at the moment are under consideration by the public, press and other news media.
4. In discussing controversial issues, the teacher must keep in mind that the classroom is a forum and not a committee for producing resolutions or dogmatic pronouncements. The class should feel no responsibility for reaching an agreement.
5. It is the teacher's responsibility to bring out the facts concerning controversial questions. He has the right to express his opinions, but in doing so it is important that his students understand that it is his own opinion and is not to be accepted by them as an authoritative answer.
6. The principal bears a major responsibility for the administration and supervision of the curriculum including the selection of material and methods of instruction. He must be continuously aware of what is being taught in his school.
7. A teacher who is in doubt concerning the advisability of discussing certain issues in the classroom should confer with the principal as to the appropriateness of doing so. If the principal and the teacher are unable to agree, the issue should be referred to the Superintendent or his designee.
8. It is recognized that citizens of the community have a right to protest to the school administration when convinced that unfair and prejudiced presentations are being made by any teacher. In considering such protests, the Board will provide for a hearing in accordance with American principles of justice if in its judgment such a procedure is required.
9. Principals will ensure that these regulations are included in teachers' handbooks and are reviewed periodically.

Issued prior to 1991

