

District Policy & Regulations

BOARD OF EDUCATION COLUMBUS SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROGRAM
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CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

The Board of Education believes that the consideration of controversial issues has a legitimate place in the instructional program of the schools.

Properly introduced and conducted, the consideration of such issues can help students learn to identify important issues, explore fully and fairly all sides of an issue, weigh carefully the values and factors involved, and develop techniques for formulating and evaluating positions.

For purposes of this policy, a controversial issue is a topic on which opposing points of view have been promulgated by responsible opinion and/or likely to-arouse both support and opposition in the community.

The Board will permit the introduction and proper educational use of controversial issues provided that their use in the instructional program:

- A. is related to the instructional goals of the course of study and level of maturity of the students;
- B. does not tend to indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view;
- C. encourages open-mindedness and is conducted in a spirit of scholarly inquiry.

Controversial issues related to the program may be initiated by the students themselves provided they are presented in the ordinary course of classroom instruction and it is not substantially disruptive to the educational setting.

Controversial issues may not be initiated by a source outside the schools-unless prior approval has been given by the principal. Issues pertaining to human growth and development, as defined by statute, are subject to 118.019 Wis. Stats.

When controversial issues have not been specified in the course of study, the Board will permit the instructional use of only those issues which have been approved by the principal.

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In the discussion of any issue, a teacher may express a personal opinion, but shall identify it as such, and must not express such an opinion for the purpose of persuading students to his/her point of view.

The Board recognizes that controversial issues may arise during the course of study that some parents/guardians may find objectionable due to personal or religious beliefs. A parent/guardian may request that their child be excused from particular classes for specified reasons. The student, however, will not be excused from participating in the course or activities mandated by the State and will be provided alternative learning activities during times of parent requested absences.

Wisconsin Constitution, Article I
115.25 (31), 118.01 (2) (c) (d), 118.019, 121.02 (1) (h) Wisconsin Statutes
PI 41, Wisconsin Administrative Code

Cross Ref: 2260, Equal Educational Opportunities
2522, Selection & Challenge of Library/Media Materials
9130, Public Complaints

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