

DE SOTO AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

381

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

A "controversial issue" is defined as an area of significant academic inquiry about which substantial segments of the citizens of this community, state, or nation hold sincere and conflicting points of view.

It is the belief of the Board of Education that controversial issues should be fairly presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom to the end that individual students may recognize the validity of other points of view and can learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the factual bases underlying the controversy.

It shall be the responsibility of the instructor to:

- present fully and fairly the opportunity and means for students to study, consider and discuss all sides of controversial issues, including but not limited to political philosophies;
- protect the right of the student to study pertinent controversial issues within limits of good taste, allowing the expression of their personal opinions without jeopardizing their relationships with their instructors or school; and
- refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views or selfish propaganda of any kind through any classroom or school device.

With respect to controversial issues, the District encourages instructors to lead full discussions thereof in a spirit of academic freedom to the end that the student may learn that he/she has the right to disagree with the opinion of another, but has the responsibility to base his/her disagreement upon fact and at the same time respect the right of another to hold a conflicting opinion.

In no situation will a minor student be required to read printed material or see other audio-visual materials related to beliefs/issues/ideas that are contrary to the moral

convictions of the minor student and/or his/her
parents/guardians.

LEGAL REF.: Sections 115.28(31) Wisconsin Statutes
118.01(2)(d)2c
118.019
PI 41, Wisconsin Administrative Code

CROSS REF.: 331, Parent Rights and District
Programs/Activities
871, Public Complaints about Instructional
Materials

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