

# Series 600 – Educational Program

Policy Title: TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Policy Code No. 603.8

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A “controversial issue” is defined as an area of significant academic inquiry about which substantial portions of this community, state, or nation hold sincere conflicting points of view.

It is the belief of the Board of Directors 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 but can learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the factual basis 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.

It shall be the responsibility of the instructor to protect the rights of the students to study pertinent controversial issues within limits of good taste, and to allow the expression of their personal opinions without jeopardizing their relationships with their instructors.

It shall be the responsibility of the instructor to refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views or selfish propaganda of any kind through any classroom or school device; however, an instructor shall not be prohibited from expressing a personal opinion as long as the student is encouraged to independently reach a decision.

It shall be the policy of this school system with respect to controversial issues to encourage 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 he/she 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. It shall be the practice of the school district with respect to controversial issues to keep parents/guardians informed.

Date of Adoption        08/14/1989

Review Date            08/13/2007

Revision Date

Legal Ref.:     Iowa Code Chapter 28E, Section 280.15

Cross Ref.:     Board Policy  
                      603.4 Instructional Materials Selection  
                      603.7 Outside Resource People