

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM

Background

The Division believes that controversial issues should be fairly presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom so that students may recognize the validity of other points of view, but can also learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the opinions related to the controversy.

The Division encourages full discussions of controversial issues, in a spirit of academic freedom that shows students that they have the right to disagree with the opinions of others, but that they also have the responsibility to base the disagreement on facts and to respect the right of others to hold conflicting opinions.

Procedures

1. The teacher shall present full and fair opportunity and means for students to study, consider, organize, discuss and evaluate all sides of controversial issues including, but not limited to, political philosophies.
2. The teacher shall protect the right of the student to study pertinent controversial issues within the limits of good taste, and to allow students to express personal opinions without jeopardizing their relationship with the teacher, other students, or the school administration.
3. The teacher shall refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, extreme or unethical positions, or selfish propaganda of any kind through any classroom or school device. Teachers shall use caution when expressing their personal opinions and shall identify them as such while still encouraging students to reach their own decisions independently.
4. The teacher shall be sensitive to the values and beliefs of individuals and groups within the community.

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References

Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12