

**PARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #6
BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

CODE: IMB

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL/SENSITIVE ISSUES

Controversial issues are those problems, subjects, or questions about which there are significant differences of opinion, for which there are no easy resolutions, and discussions which generally create strong feelings among people. Although there may be a disagreement over what the facts are and what they mean, subjects usually become controversial issues because of differences in the values people use in applying the facts.

Controversy is inherent in the democratic way of life. It is essential that the study and discussion of controversial issues have an important place in education of citizenship for a free society. Students can develop into responsible citizens with informed loyalty to democracy only through the process of examining evidence, facts, differing viewpoints, through the exercise of freedom of thought and moral choice, and through the making of responsible decisions.

Each teacher has the right and the obligation to teach about controversial issues. It is the teacher's responsibility to select issues for study and discussion that contribute to the attainment of course objectives, and to make available relevant information concerning various aspects of the issues to all students. The teacher also has the obligation to be as objective as possible and to present several sides of an issue in a fair and timely manner. The teacher does not have the right to indoctrinate students to his/her views. Students have the right to form and express their own point of view and opinions without jeopardizing their position in the classroom or in the school.

Controversial issues are to be presented with good judgment and in an age-appropriate manner. The influence of an issue on values and attitudes of the individual student must be considered in conjunction with the actual subject matter.

Adopted: 1/20/98
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