

Education Program

Series 600

Policy Title: Teaching Controversial Issues

Code No. 603.9-R1

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A "controversial issue" is a topic of significant academic inquiry about which substantial groups of citizens of this community, this state, or this nation hold sincere, conflicting points of view.

It is the belief of this Marshalltown Community School District 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 learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the facts related to the controversy.

It shall be the responsibility of the instructor to present full and fair the opportunity and means for students to study, consider, and discuss all sides of controversial issues, including, but not limited to, political philosophies.

It shall be the responsibility of the instructor to protect the right of the student to study pertinent controversial issues within limits of good taste, and to allow the student to express personal opinions without jeopardizing the student's relationship with the teacher.

It shall be the responsibility of the teacher 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 students are encouraged to reach his own decision independently.

The board encourages full discussion 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 upon facts and to respect the right of others to hold-conflicting opinions.

Adopted: Fall 1969

Legal Reference: (Code of Iowa)

Reviewed: October 5, 2015

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November 5, 2018

Cross Reference: