

SECTION: PROGRAMS

TITLE: CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

ADOPTED: March 14, 1994

REVISED:

# Farrell Area School District

## 119. CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

### 1. Purpose

Training for effective citizenship is accepted as one of the major goals of the public schools. The instructional program developed to achieve this purpose properly places great emphasis upon teaching about American heritage, the rights and privileges we enjoy as citizens, and the citizenship responsibilities that must be assumed in maintaining the American way of life.

In training for effective citizenship, it is frequently necessary for pupils to study issues that are controversial. In considering such issues, it shall be the purpose of the schools to recognize the pupil's right and/or obligation to:

1. Study any controversial issue concerning which, at the student's level, s/he should begin to have an opinion.
2. Study under competent instruction in an atmosphere of freedom from bias and prejudice.
3. Form and express his/her own judgments on controversial issues without jeopardizing relations with the teacher or the school.
4. Recognize that reasonable compromise is often an important facet in decision-making in society.
5. Respect minority opinion.

### 2. Authority

The Board will permit the introduction and proper educational use of controversial issues, provided that their use in the instructional program is in accordance with policy and administrative regulations.

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3. Guidelines

1. Deal with controversial topics as impartially and objectively as possible. Do not include own biases.
2. Handle all such topics in a manner suited to the range of knowledge, maturity, and competence of the students.
3. Have teaching materials dealing with all possible aspects of the topics readily available.
4. Do not expect or require that the class reach an agreement.
5. Whenever you are in doubt about the advisability of taking up a given "hot" topic, consult with the principal.
6. Remember that the policy of the Board is designed to protect and support the teacher, the pupils, and the school from reprisals whenever pupils are studying a controversial subject.

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