

LEARNING/INSTRUCTION

Teaching of Controversial Issues

1. The key to a good educational program is the classroom teacher. The teaching of citizenship in which young people must necessarily study and explore crucial controversial issues requires particular skills and superior training. Teachers will be carefully screened so that only the best qualified of the teachers available will be assigned to teach subjects where controversial issues are usually studied.
2. The following guidelines are to be followed by the teacher:
 - a. The teacher's approach to the topic must be objective and impartial.
 - b. The topic and the treatment of the topic must be within the range of the normal expectancies of the knowledge, maturity, and competence of the students involved.
 - c. The time allotment for the study of any issue should be adequate to study the various dimensions of the issue without prolonging its consideration, thus giving it undue emphasis.
 - d. The classroom is to be regarded as a forum for exploring the multitude of points of views relating to controversial issues and is not to be used as a committee to produce resolutions or to produce final solutions for problems.
 - e. A teacher has the responsibility of bringing out all the facts known. The teacher has the right to express a point of view; however, it must be identified as the teacher's point of view without superimposing it as an authoritative position.
 - f. Issues which are considered in the classroom should be real problems both to the pupils and the teachers. They should be current and significant.
 - g. Advice and counsel should be sought from building administration if the teacher anticipates any concern for a particular issue.
3. The principal, as the building instructional leader, should be continually aware of classroom projects relating to controversial issues and should provide reasonable supervision.
4. In the event that an alleged unfair or prejudiced learning experience occurred, the citizen should make a written protest to the building principal, who will notify the appropriate superintendent.
5. Parents or other interested citizens have recourse to a procedure for questioning the suitability of learning materials. They may obtain this procedure from the building principal, the appropriate consultant, or the appropriate superintendent.

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By Deputy Superintendent
Minneapolis, Minnesota

