

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To ensure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the District.
2. Teachers should present the issues selected without advocating their individual positions on such issues and are encouraged to facilitate a balanced discussion of such issues. Teachers should refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The discussion of these issues in the classroom should be objective and scholarly with emphasis on respectful analysis of differing points of view. Teachers are expected to encourage an environment that is supportive of all views.
4. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer additional expertise or qualifications not available in the schools.
5. In all cases, teachers must obtain the Principal's permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations.

REF: ABRHS Handbook

Distribution of Materials Policy, File: KHBA

Use of School Facilities Policy, File: KF

APPROVED: 3/16/17