

INSTRUCTION

SUBJECT: Controversial Issues/Prohibited Studies

Teachers have a responsibility to teach about controversial issues and shall be free to consider all issues which will contribute to the educational development of students. Such teaching shall at all times be consistent with state law.

All instructional materials used in teaching about controversial issues must adequately and objectively cover essential aspects of each issue.

Controversial matters, especially those which have strong emotional overtones, require the exercise of good judgment as to the kinds of material that are appropriate. Two criteria shall be considered in developing presentation at each educational level:

1. The maturity level of the students.
2. The capacity of students for understanding both concepts and values.

The teacher shall recognize the difference between teaching and advocating, and he/she must avoid promoting partisan viewpoints. He/she must keep well informed, aid pupils in researching facts, and help them to make carefully considered evaluations based upon all sides of the issue.

No publication of a sectarian, partisan, or denominational character shall be distributed or used for sectarian, partisan, or denominational purposes in any school, except that nothing herein shall restrict the development and use of school library collections. No sectarian or denominational doctrine shall be taught in any school.

Complaints Concerning Controversial Issues

Persons having complaints concerning methods or materials of instruction used in the study and discussion of any issue shall follow the established office procedures for complaints concerning County Office of Education personnel and complaints concerning instructional materials.

(cf 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning School Personnel)
(cf 1312.2 - Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

51550 Prohibited instruction or activity

51510 Prohibited study or supplemental materials

51511 Religious matters properly included in courses of study

51530 Prohibition and definition re advocating or teaching communism with intent to indoctrinate

51550 Sex education courses

60040 Portrayal of cultural and racial diversity

60044 Prohibited instructional materials

60045 Required to be accurate, objective, current, and suited to needs and comprehension at respective grade levels