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A major goal of the Caswell County Public Schools is to assist students in successfully assuming the responsibilities of citizenship. To achieve this purpose, the instructional program should emphasize the rights and privileges we enjoy as citizens and the responsibilities that must be assumed in maintaining a democratic society.

In preparing for effective citizenship, students must learn the techniques and skills of democratic dissent. They must have the opportunity to hear, discuss, and study issues that are controversial. Teachers must be free to conduct such discussions without fear of reprisal so long as they maintain a high level of professional impartiality. Accordingly, it shall be the purpose of our schools to recognize the student's rights to the following:

1. To hear, discuss, and study controversial issues that have political, social and economic significance at his level of maturity, and in the appropriate classes.
2. To have access to relevant information and materials.
3. To hear, discuss and study under competent instruction and in an atmosphere of respect for different opinions.
4. To form and express opinions on controversial issues without jeopardizing his relationship with the teacher of the school.

Family Life and Sex Education

The Caswell County Board of Public Education believes that a parent/legal guardian/legal custodian has the primary responsibility for providing for the health and well-being of his child, and that a parent/legal guardian/legal custodian has the primary responsibility for instilling values, ethics, and character in his child, and that a parent/legal guardian/legal custodian has the primary responsibility for educating his child in all areas, including the area of sexuality. Therefore, the Caswell County Public School System provides a comprehensive School Health Program based on the guidelines and objectives included in the *Framework of Healthful Living Education*, which was approved by the State Board of Education to meet the requirements of the Comprehensive Health Education Program.

Contraceptives, including condoms and other devices, shall not be made available or distributed on school property.

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TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION

Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs

The study of the role of religion in the culture of human kind and in the history of the world should have a place in education, as does the study of religious writings as literature. Such studies as part of the curriculum are not to be celebrations of religious teaching in a manner, which is devotional or doctrinal. Devotional or doctrinal celebrations or religious activities are in violation of the Constitution which mandates the separation of Church and State and which prohibits the advancement of religion or of one religion or another.

In our society, a variety of religious beliefs are held. Instructional activities of the Caswell County Schools should promote respect, mutual understanding and sensitivity to these beliefs. Thus, administrative procedures and school practices must reflect the philosophy that recognition of religion in the schools must be educational in nature and that the schools must be sensitive to all beliefs.

The Board of Education endorses teaching about religion where the curriculum guides indicate it is appropriate and when the classroom atmosphere encourages both teachers and students to be responsible and to respect the rights of each person.

Such teaching must foster knowledge about religion, not indoctrination into religion; it should be academic, not devotional or testimonial; it should promote awareness of religion, not sponsor its practice; it should inform students about the diversity of religious views rather than impose one particular view; and it should promote understanding and respect rather than divisiveness.

Consequently, the Board endorses, where appropriate and feasible, the professional development of teachers who wish to learn more about various religions and the constitutionally appropriate place of religion in the curriculum. The Board also supports the development of new instructional materials that will reflect age-appropriate content and activities for teaching about religion.

Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs

Educational programs and activities related to religion will be planned and implemented according to the following regulations:

1. Elective courses about religion such as world religion, and history of the religion in the United States, religious literature and the inclusion of such topics within broader

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subjects such as world history, world literature, etc. are legally permissible and encouraged. When knowledge of religion is intrinsic to classroom activity, teachers should find ways to teach directly and objectively its interrelation with other elements of human culture.

2. An instructional program should include the relationship between government and American religious freedom to help students prepare for full citizenship in a society characterized by a variety of beliefs.
3. Prayer, devotional Bible reading and other forms of overt religious exercises are not allowed; whether voluntary or required, at any official school activity or school sponsored activity, including school clubs, during the regular school day.
4. Assemblies of students, which include religious worship or ceremonies or activities that are of an evangelistic nature, are not allowed. However, assembly programs, which are inspirational in nature, are not prohibited, provided that they conform to these regulations.
5. Religious clubs whose purposes are educational are allowed on the same basis as other activity clubs within the schools. A violation of these regulations will result in revocation of school sponsorship.
6. All school employees are individually responsible for upholding these regulations.

Ref.: "Religion in Public Schools" - A Report by the Advisory Committee on Religion, Studies to the State Board of Education Policy Committee (January 4, 1978)

CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

The Board recognizes that visiting speakers may be of specific persuasions and that their topics may be controversial. If they are prohibited from speaking because of their points of view, academic freedom is endangered. Students need to study issues upon which there is disagreement and to practice analyzing problems, gathering and organizing facts, discriminating between facts and opinions, discussing different viewpoints and drawing tentative conclusions.

When correctly handled, the use of controversial speakers becomes an invaluable component in accomplishing the goals of citizenship education. However, this places a

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serious responsibility on the professional staff members to correctly structure the learning situation involving a speaker.

All speakers must be invited through the school principal, who shall endeavor to engage speakers for both sides of the issues. In no instance shall a speaker who advocates unconstitutional or illegal acts or procedures be permitted to address students.

Legal Ref.: U. S. Constitution, Amendment I, Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U. S. 503 (1969)