

Decatur County Board of Education			
Monitoring: Review: Annually, in December	Descriptor Term: Controversial Issues and Materials	Descriptor Code: 4.800	Issued Date: 07/13/17
		Rescinds:	Issued:

1 **CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

2 The discussion of issues in the classroom which are politically, philosophically, or socially controversial
3 shall be relevant to the subject matter being taught, related to educational objectives, appropriate for the
4 age and maturity of students, and shall not materially or substantially disrupt or threaten to disrupt the
5 discipline of the school.

6 To ensure that controversial issues are presented and discussed fairly and objectively and with instruction
7 as their goal, the following guidelines shall be observed:

- 8 1. All personnel will seek to create an atmosphere in which differences of opinion can be voiced
9 without fear and hostility and with mutual respect for all viewpoints;
- 10 2. Teachers will encourage students to withhold judgment and to avoid making of conclusions until
11 all relevant and significant facts have been assembled, critically examined, and checked for
12 accuracy;
- 13 3. Teachers will seek to develop in students a sense of responsibility for their beliefs, opinions,
14 attitudes, and actions;
- 15 4. Teachers shall place major emphasis upon “why” and “how” to think rather than “what” to think;
16 and
- 17 5. If the subject matter being taught involves conflicting opinions, theories, or schools of thought,
18 the teacher will ensure that differing sides of an issue are explored in order to help students
19 develop their own critical faculties.

20 **CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS**

21
22 Parent(s) may request that a student not be required to read a book, use certain materials, or participate
23 in an activity. If the request to the teacher is denied, then a written request may be submitted on the
24 appropriate form to the principal.

- 1 No student who is granted such a request shall be penalized academically for his/her failure to participate
2 in an activity, read a book, or use certain materials.
- 3 The final decision concerning the use of controversial materials shall rest with the board.
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Cross References

Staff Rights and Responsibilities 5.600
Textbook Selection, Distribution and Care 4.401
Selection of Instructional Materials 4.402
Reconsideration of Instructional Materials 4.403
Use of the Internet 4.406
School and System Websites 4.407