

# POLICY

## STAFFORD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

PROGRAM  
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Controversial Issues

### 2240 CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Free discussion of controversial issues political, economic, and social shall be encouraged in the classroom whenever appropriate for the level of the group.

However, students will not be surveyed about any of the topics set forth in Policy and Regulation 2415.05, except in accordance with the provisions therein and applicable law.

Issues may be considered controversial which arouse strong reactions, based either on personal conviction or allegiance to a group. School treatment of controversial issues shall be designed to instruct pupils in fair and objective study techniques. The decision on whether a particular controversial issue shall become a matter for school study shall be based on the timeliness of the question the maturity and needs of the pupils and the purposes of the schools. Classroom discussions on controversial questions, which arise unexpectedly, shall be the responsibility of the teacher who shall provide relevant, unbiased and impartial information on both sides of the question. Such discussions shall be kept free from the assumption that there is one correct answer that should emerge from a discussion and be taught authoritatively to the pupils.

By refraining from expressing personal views before and during the period of research and study, the teacher encourages the pupils to search after truth and to think for themselves. The development of an ability to meet issues without prejudice and to withhold judgments while facts are being collected, assembled, and weighed, and relationships seen before drawing inferences of conclusions is among the most valuable outcomes of a free educational system.

Pupils shall be taught to recognize each other's right to form an opinion on controversial issues, and shall be assured of their own right to do so without jeopardizing their relationship with the teacher or the school.

The Building Principal shall have the authority to limit or suspend discussion of controversial issues pending a review of the issue/materials. Instructional materials, not previously approved, must be reviewed by the Principal before being introduced into the classroom.

Adopted: 22 July 2004  
Revised: 15 April 2010

