



6240: TAUGHT CURRICULUM - CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

A major focus of the Millard Public Schools mission is to prepare our students for effective citizenship, which includes preparation for constructive participation in a democratic society, a society in which many differing opinions are held and differing beliefs are espoused. It is important that students develop an understanding of ideas which may be different than their own. It is important that they develop judgment, a capacity to discern the difference between fact and opinion, and to weigh arguments, debates, slogans and appeals. To achieve this purpose, students should have an opportunity to examine controversial issues within the context of their formal education experiences. Accordingly, it will be the purpose of this policy to establish those parameters within which the District's professional staff and students can teach and learn about controversial issues.

Student's Rights and Responsibilities:

- 1. To research, study and discuss significant issues and to reach judgments and express opinions without jeopardizing their relationship with classmates or teachers.**
- 2. To learn in an open classroom and school climate so that they feel free to examine any aspect of a controversial issues.**
- 3. To study with competent instruction in an impartial atmosphere and have access to relevant material.**
- 4. To be protected against indoctrination, whether it be political, social, economic, religious, or other.**
- 5. To assure that when controversial issues are being discussed in the classroom, every effort is being made to present various viewpoints fairly, impartially and discreetly.**

Teacher Rights and Responsibilities:

- 1. To be free to conduct reasonable study and discussion of controversial issues without fear of reprisal.**
- 2. To maintain a high degree of impartiality.**
- 3. To treat controversial issues objectively and to present alternate and/or divergent positions and opinions.**
- 4. To determine the degree and extent of consideration given to a specific controversial issue based upon knowledge, intellectual maturity, and competence of the students in the class.**
- 5. To ensure that an accurate, factual and balanced presentation of material is readily available for the student.**
- 6. To be assured, if the need ever arises, that parents will be directed and encouraged by the Board and administration to take their questions and comments directly to the teacher concerned, as outlined in Policy 1310 and Rules 1310.1 and 1310.2.**
- 7. To ensure that a student's view of an issue is not suppressed as long as the expression of that view can be made in a reasonable manner.**

Teachers, who in the performance of their teaching duties are engaged in the study or discussion of such controversial issues shall be defended by the Board and District from unjust or unfair criticism or legal actions.

The Board's position on this matter applies to the regular curriculum of the schools and to extra-curricular activities before and after school, within the school building or outside of the school, whenever school or school-sponsored or sanctioned groups are involved. The Board reserves the right to exercise significant discretion in determining the content of school curriculum within the limitations provided by law.

The Office of the Superintendent is authorized to establish such rules as needed to carry out the intent of the Board as defined in this policy.

Date of Revision

November 2, 1992

June 28, 1999

December 4, 2006

Reaffirmed

December 3, 2012

Related Policies and Rules

[1310: Complaints: School Personnel / Instructional Materials](#)

[1310.1: Complaints: School Personnel](#)

[1310.2: Complaints: Instructional Materials](#)

[6240.1: Taught Curriculum - Controversial Issues](#)

Legal Reference

Nebr. Rev. Stat. §79-526, Constitution of the United States, First Amendment