

# Board Policy

## Controversial Issues

Controversial issues may be studied as part of the curriculum, and teachers shall present these issues in their classrooms in an impartial and objective manner.

Teachers wishing to call upon outside speakers in the presentation of controversial issues are required to obtain the approval of the principal who shall keep in mind the obligation for presenting opposing views as well and who shall inform the Program Director prior to the presentation.

The parents or legal guardians of students or the students themselves, if over either (18), have the right to request the exclusion of the student from exposure to controversial subjects. Such exclusion shall be granted by the administrator, if deemed appropriate.

It is recognized that parents and citizens of the community have a right to object to perceived unfair and prejudiced presentations made by a teacher. In considering such objections, the District Superintendent, Chief Operating Officer, or designee shall provide for a hearing so that both parties may fairly express their views. If requested, the decision of the District Superintendent, Chief Operating Officer, or designee may be appealed to the Board.

### **Instructional Materials Selection and Controversial Topics and Material**

#### 1. Responsibility

- a. The Board delegates the authority for the selection of materials to the instructional staff.
- b. Final recommendation on purchase should remain with the instructional staff, subject to approval by the District Superintendent, Chief Operating Officer, or designee and, where appropriate, the Board.

#### 2. Objectives of Selection

- a. The selection should reflect and help implement the basic functions of a quality Eastern Suffolk BOCES program. The materials chosen should:
  - i. provide teachers and students with materials that will support and enrich the curriculum and
  - ii. enable and encourage students to further develop their full potential as creative and responsible individuals by meeting and stimulating the greatest possible diversity of interest and abilities.

- b. To fulfill these two basic functions, endeavor should be made to provide easy access to a cataloged and comprehensive selection of a variety of materials at appropriate levels of difficulty to:
  - i. generate an understanding of American freedom and a desire to preserve those freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizenship;
  - ii. develop intellectual and practical skills, literacy and aesthetic taste and discrimination in choice of materials;
  - iii. foster a breadth and depth of insight that will stimulate growth of ethical standards and a sensitivity of social, intellectual, and aesthetic values;
  - iv. encourage students to locate, use, and evaluate as much material as possible on opposing sides of controversial issues so that they may develop, under guidance, the practice of critical examination and thinking;
  - v. fairly represent the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contribution to our American heritage; and
  - vi. encourage the professional growth of the faculty.
- c. Controversial Topics and Material

All instructional curriculums will undoubtedly include controversial topics or materials at one time or another. For purposes of this policy, a controversial topic is one to which an individual formally objects as being inappropriate for use in a public school classroom.

**References:**

- Administrative Regulation 7220R.1 – Controversial Issues

First Adopted: 7/1/03  
Readopted: 7/11/07  
Revised: 1/25/12