

- 5475.1 Training for Effective Citizenship
Training for effective citizenship is accepted as one of the major purposes of the schools of the Fairfield Area School District. The instructional program developed to achieve this purpose properly places great emphasis upon teaching about our American heritage, the rights and privileges we enjoy as citizens and the citizenship responsibilities that must be assumed in maintaining our American way of life. In training for effective citizenship, it is frequently necessary for pupils to study issues that are controversial. It is the Board's purpose to recognize the student's right to:
- 5475.1a Study a controversial issue which has political; economic, or social significance and concerning which (at his/her level) he/she should begin to have an opinion;
 - 5475.1b Have free access to all relevant information, representing both sides of an issue, including the materials that circulate freely in the community;
 - 5475.1c Study under competent instruction in an atmosphere of freedom from bias and prejudice;
 - 5475.1d Form and express hihe/s her own opinions on controversial issues without thereby jeopardizing hihe/s her relation with hihe/s her teacher or the school.
- 5475.2 The final authority on the instruction of controversial issues rests with the Board and the Superintendent.
- 5475.3 The Principal bears a major responsibility for the administration and the supervision of the curriculum, including the selection of materials and methods of instruction. He/she must be continuously aware of what is being taught in his/her school.
- 5475.4 Impartiality and Objectivity
The approach of the teacher to controversial topics must be impartial and objective. Teachers should use the following criteria for determining the appropriateness of certain issues for consideration as a part of the curriculum.

- 5475.4a The treatment of the issue in question must be within the range, knowledge, maturity and competence of the students.
- 5475.4b There should be study materials and other learning aids available from which a reasonable amount of data pertaining to all aspects of the issue should be obtained.
- 5475.4c The consideration of the issue should require only as much time as is needed for satisfactory study by the class but sufficient time should be provided to cover the issue adequately.
- 5475.4d The issue should be current, significant, real and important to the students and teacher. Significant issues are those which in general concern considerable numbers of people, are related to basic principles or at the moment are under consideration by the public, press and mass media.

In discussing controversial issues, the teacher should keep in mind that the classroom is a forum and not a committee for producing resolutions or dogmatic pronouncements. The class should feel no responsibility for reaching an agreement but see and appreciate the diversity of the discussion which may not have an objective response.

It is the teacher's responsibility to bring out the facts concerning controversial questions. Teachers should direct discussion and refrain from emphasizing personal biases relating to any position on the subject matter.

A teacher who is in doubt concerning the advisability of discussing certain issues in the classroom should confer with hihe/her Principal as to the appropriateness of doing so. If the Principal and the teacher are unable to agree, the issue should be referred to the Superintendent.