INSTRUCTION

Study of Controversial Issues/Guest Speakers

The board of directors believes that controversial issues are a part of the district's instructional program when related to subject matter in a given grade level or specific curricular field. Teachers will use professional judgment in determining the appropriateness of the issue to the curriculum and the maturity of the students. Questionable matters may be referred to the principal for decision.

Teachers shall guide discussions and procedures, including guest speakers, to gain divergent points of view, with thoroughness and objectivity to acquaint students with the need to recognize opposing viewpoints, the importance of fact, the value of judgment and the virtue of respect for conflicting opinions. In the presentation of all controversial issues, every effort will be made to effect a balance of biases, divergent points of view, and opportunity for exploration by the students into all sides of the issue.

In discussing controversial issues, the teacher will encourage students to express their own views, assuring that it be done in a manner that gives due respect to one another's rights and opinions. When discussing controversial issues, the teacher will respect positions other than his/her own. Students will be encouraged, after class discussions and independent inquiry, to reach their own conclusions regarding controversial issues.

The superintendent shall establish procedures for the approval of the use of a guest speaker. When an invited speakers expresses opinions which are partisan or considered controversial by a large portion of the community, the school shall provide for the presentation of the opposing views.

A. If the teacher and the principal believe the guest speaker's topic is controversial, they will develop a plan whereby the issue(s) can be presented in an objective unbiased manner.

B. In the event the speaker's topic is determined to be controversial, the teacher will notify students beforehand that any student who does not wish to attend the presentation may have an alternative assignment.

Date: 9/24/79; 3/24/97; 3/25/02; 11/22/04.

PORT TOWNSEND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50