



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

Board Policy Statement

6144.00 - Controversial Issues

Approved on March 1, 1999

Controversial issues are those subjects about which there are significant differences of opinion based on differing values people bring to an issue. As a basic educational competency, students should develop abilities to deal with controversial issues.

Controversy is inherent in the democratic way of life, and study and discussion of controversial issues is essential to citizenship education in a free society. Students can become better informed individuals through examining evidence, facts, and differing viewpoints; by exercising freedom of thought and moral choice; and through making responsible decisions. Perpetuation of the fundamental principles of American society requires opportunities for students to read, to gather information, to speak, to hear alternative viewpoints, and to reach honest judgments according to individual abilities.

Teachers shall help students identify and evaluate relevant information, learn the techniques of critical analysis, and make independent judgments. They must reinforce students' rights to present and support personal conclusions with those who have opposing points of view. Teachers should also develop student interest in objective reexamination of long-standing issues, and of newly significant issues, and promote vigorous exchanges of ideas.