

## TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

The Patrick County School Board accepts training for effective citizenship as one of the major purposes of education. This can be done by recognizing that many important areas of study involve issues on which differing positions are held by individuals or groups.

In considering such issues, it shall be the purpose of the Patrick County Schools to allow study of teacher assigned issues as follows:

1. Have free access to all relevant information and materials in the school.
2. Conduct research in an atmosphere of freedom from bias and prejudice.
3. Form and express opinions on assigned issues.

The role of the teacher in the presentation of assigned issues is vitally important. All sides of the issue should be given the students in a dispassionate manner. The goal is for the students to be taught to think clearly on all matters of importance, and to make decisions in the light of all the material that has been presented or can be researched on the issues. Indoctrination is not the intent or purpose of the school division. Although the instructional program of the school division includes many facets of the political party system in the United States, the School Board does not approve as a part of the school program the involvement of students in activities that imply school endorsement of an individual political party or candidate.

Adopted: September 8, 1997

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Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78