
AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

APS Code: IMB

Adopted April 1979

Recoded October 1998

Reviewed September 2007

Reviewed November 2015

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL/SENSITIVE ISSUES

Controversial issues inevitably become part of the educational program and may provide students with opportunities for free expression, exchange of ideas and viewpoints and foster critical thinking. Controversial issues, materials and topics, appropriate to the grade level, may be introduced in the classroom in accordance with procedures established by the Superintendent of Schools.

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PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEALING WITH SENSITIVE TOPICS

Controversial issues, materials and topics may be introduced into classrooms provided:

1. they meet the goals and objectives of the course;
2. they are appropriately related to the topic currently being studied;
3. they are appropriate to the age and grade level of the student(s);
4. no attempt is made by the teacher, speakers or other person(s) to persuade or propagandize students to accept a particular point of view;
5. all sides of the issue are presented equally and fairly to the students;
6. the teacher receives approval of the building principal prior to presenting a planned program or lesson plan which is expected to be controversial;
7. teachers new to the district and/or new to the grade level attend district training prior to teaching about sensitive topics; and
8. parents/guardians sign a letter of approval or denial for all students to opt in or opt out of instruction in human sexuality.

USING BOARD ADOPTED MATERIALS

Aurora Public Schools policies indicate board approval must be secured for any instructional resources to teach human growth and development, including videos, DVDs and software. The approved resources are listed on the basic and supplemental adopted materials list on the Aurora Public Schools website.

Guest speakers who address human sexuality need prior approval from the principal.

Teachers are required to review the policy and obtain principal approval prior to addressing controversial issues within instruction. Sensitive issues related to human growth and development

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may include human sexuality, loss and grief topics such as death, suicide, divorce and abusive relationships.

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S REMOVAL OF STUDENTS FROM HEALTH EDUCATION CURRICULA

By Colorado law (C.R.S. 22-25-106[I]), parents/guardians may remove students from any or all components of the health class. Aurora Public Schools policy requires that parents return a permission form for their students to participate in any human growth and development instructional unit at any grade level, using district approved parent permission forms.

Special care must be taken by science teachers, who have the responsibility to teach human body systems, not to extend the lesson to human growth and development, unless permission forms are obtained and APS policy is adhered to carefully.

CROSS REF.: IJOB, Community Resource Persons/Speakers