

## CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

A "controversial issue" is a topic of significant academic inquiry about which substantial groups of citizens of this community, this state or this nation hold sincere, conflicting points of view. The right of people to study and freely discuss controversial issues is basic to the perpetuation of our American form of democracy. It is important to have a citizenry that exercises its rights, keeps well informed, searches actively for divergent points of view, evaluates courses of action in the light of available evidence and basic democratic values, and then acts responsibly on the basis of decisions made.

To the extent that students have the necessary intellectual and emotional maturity, the teacher has a professional responsibility to encourage students to explore differing points of view, discuss controversial issues freely, and evaluate the consequences of personal decisions regarding such issues in the context of acceptable legal, ethical, and moral constraints.

Legal Reference: Code of Iowa 282 Chapter 25.3(6)

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