



## **HADDON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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### **2240. CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

Controversial issues arise from conflicts involving important proposals or policies on which our citizens hold different points of view. Our American heritage and our established traditions are not controversial. Most of the school curriculum is composed of long-established truths and well accepted values.

Free discussion of controversial issues is the heart of the democratic process. Freedom of speech and free access to information are among our most cherished traditions. Only through the study of such issues political economic or social does youth develop abilities needed for citizenship in our democracy.

Without minimizing the importance of established truths and values, it shall be the policy of the Haddon Township Board of Education to foster dispassionate, unprejudiced, scientific studies of controversial issues, as they may arise, in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.

The teacher shall serve as an impartial moderator and shall not attempt, either directly or indirectly, to limit or control the judgment of his pupils on controversial issues. It is the intent of this policy that the teacher shall foster the study of such issues, rather than teach a particular viewpoint in regard to them.

The above policy defines the study of controversial issues in terms of the rights of pupils, rather than in terms of the rights of teachers. The pupils shall have the right to study any issue in accordance with his maturity; shall have the right to free access to all relevant materials including those which circulate freely in the community; shall have the right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from partisanship and shall have the right to express his opinions on controversial issues without jeopardizing his relationship with his teachers or the school.

Adopted: May 12, 2011