

<p>JARVIS COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL</p>  <p>SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE BINDER</p>		ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NUMBER 202	PAGE NUMBER 1 of 2
		TITLE: Controversial Issues in Education	
		DATE OF APPROVAL: August 10, 2010	
PREVIOUS REVISION DATES: None – New Procedure		SIGNATURE OF COO/Principal:	
LAST REVIEWED: 2010, September 2017	REVIEW MONTH: August	Chad Haverkamp a	

Background

Controversial issues are those topics which are publicly sensitive and on which there is no consensus of values or belief. By their nature, controversial issues generate diverse opinions and debate on the distinctions between right and wrong, justice and injustice, and on the interpretations of fairness and tolerance. They include topics on which reasonable people may sincerely disagree and may reflect positions quite different than those taken by the historical Christian Church.

Opportunities to deal with sensitive issues and topics are an integral part of the education programs and schooling process. Courses of study and education programs must handle controversial issues in a manner that respects the rights and opinions reflected in different perspectives, but that rejects extreme or unethical positions. In all dealings with controversial issues and materials, the Christian perspective must be included in the presentation and considerations.

For sound judgments to be made, students must have experiences in selecting, organizing and evaluating information. The educational benefits to be gained by studying controversial issues include the development of critical thinking, moral reasoning, and an awareness and understanding of contemporary society.

The School believes that studying controversial issues is important in preparing students to participate responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society. Such study provides opportunities to develop student capacities to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view, and to reach sound judgments.

Procedures

1. For sound judgments to be made, information regarding controversial issues is to:

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- 1.1 Represent alternative points of view;
 - 1.2 Appropriately reflect the maturity, capabilities and educational needs of the students;
 - 1.3 Reflect the requirements of the courses as stated in the Program of Studies;
 - 1.4 Reflect the neighbourhood and community in which the school is located, but not to the exclusion of provincial, national and international contexts; and
 - 1.5 Reflect the teachings of the historical Christian Church and the moral/ethical position consistent with Christian lifestyle.
2. In dealing with controversial issues and topics, school administrators are expected to consult with parents, wherever possible, regarding the issues to be covered, the materials to be used and the approach to instruction in the classroom.
3. Parents may request, in writing, the exclusion of their child(ren) from formal instruction or activities dealing with a particular controversial issue.
4. Parents have the right to formally challenge the use of a particular instructional resource on the grounds of sex, racial, ethnic or cultural stereotyping or offensiveness to community standards.
5. When offering programs that are controversial in nature the principal is responsible for:
- 5.1 Reviewing program content and materials to ensure conformity to Board policy;
 - 5.2 Communicating to parents the nature of the program and holding a parent meeting (if he or she deems necessary) to review program content and materials, respond to parental concerns and inform parents of their right to exclude their children from certain program elements;
 - 5.3 Ensuring that staff are adequately in-serviced to provide effective program delivery; and
 - 5.4 Ensuring that alternative learning activities are provided for excluded students.
6. In the event of a parental challenge to the use of a particular learning resource, the principal shall follow the following procedures:
- 6.1 A meeting will be arranged between the parent and the teacher with the principal to discuss the nature of the concern.
 - 6.2 If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, the principal will render a decision which may involve changing the material used in class or exemption of the student from a portion of the class.