



## CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES POLICY

Mark Armijo Academy encourages the objective study of controversial issues. Mark Armijo staff will observe the following Guidelines:

1. Without minimizing the importance of generally accepted truths and values, the School agrees to foster dispassionate, unprejudiced, scientific studies of controversial issues in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.
2. The teacher will serve as an impartial moderator and will not attempt, directly or indirectly, to limit or control the opinion of pupils on controversial issues. It is the intent of the policy that the teacher will foster the study of such issues rather than teach particular viewpoints.
3. Freedom to teach is essential to the accomplishment of the School's goals. Therefore, teachers have the right and responsibility to exercise professional judgment, within the limits of the above guidelines, in initiating and actively pursuing consideration of controversial issues.
4. Teachers must inform the Principal of guest speakers appearing in their classrooms.
5. In the event the Principal believes that a teacher's presentation (oral, written or visual) of a controversial issue falls outside these Guidelines, the Principal will so advise the teacher, discuss the basis of his/her objections and recommend an alternative approach to the issue. The teacher shall adopt the Principal's recommendation pending any requested mediation of the dispute by a third party mediator. The mediation shall be conducted within 3 working days of the date the controversy arose, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

The following Guidelines will apply to students:

1. Students have the right to encounter diverse points of view. They will have opportunities to hear speakers and view presentations representing a wide range of views in classes, clubs, and assemblies under guidelines established by the Principal.
2. If it is established that a student and/or parent objects as a matter of principle to participation in an activity assigned by school personnel, an alternative activity will be assigned by the teacher or Principal without penalty or embarrassment to the student.

Appeal of any decision made by the Principal under these Guidelines may be made to the Governing Council in accordance with the School's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Approved by Mark Armijo Academy Governance Board 2/9/22