

Dr. Marta Pérez, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CURRICULUM INVOLVING MATTERS REGARDING
POLITICAL VIEWPOINTS**

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC

BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At the October 21, 2020, School Board meeting, the Board approved Agenda Item H-20 (Political Biases) presented by Dr. Martin Karp, former School Board member. The purpose of Item H-20 was for the District to survey students to learn whether they believed that they had been subjected to political bias in the classroom or at their school. Similar to the concerns raised by Agenda Item H-20, prior to the recent general election, parents have voiced concerns that classroom instruction is sometimes tilted to one particular political viewpoint at the expense of an opposing political view or without allowing for the expression of all political views.

While teachers are allowed a wide latitude with respect to academic freedom in their classroom instruction and the introduction of political matters and viewpoints during a class lesson, our Board policies do limit the manner in which such topics may be included as part of the instructional program. Specifically Policy 2240, *Controversial Issues and Student Expression*, allows teachers to address controversial issues, including political matters during classroom discussions and as part of the instructional program when such a discussion: “is related to the instructional goals of the course of study and level of maturity of the students; does not attempt to indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view; encourages open-mindedness and is conducted in a spirit of scholarly inquiry; provides students with the right to form and express an opinion on controversial issues without subjecting them to academic consequences or disciplinary action for expressing their viewpoints; provides students with the right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice; and provides students with the right to form and express an opinion on controversial issues without jeopardizing their relationship with the teacher or the school.”

This item is being presented to request that the Superintendent review instructional materials and District curriculum regarding controversial issues and political viewpoints to determine whether they may need to be revised or updated in order to ensure that they clearly indicate that such classroom instruction should not be used in an attempt to indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view. Such a review should also be cognizant of and not infringe upon the academic freedom provided instructional personnel in these matters.

H-10

This Item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney’s Office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTA PÉREZ:**

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, request that the Superintendent review the District's existing curriculum and instructional materials regarding controversial issues and political viewpoints to determine whether they may need to be revised or updated in order to ensure that they clearly indicate that such classroom instruction should not be used in an attempt to indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view, and to provide a report back to the Board by the January 2021 regular Board meeting.