

TEACHING ABOUT RELIGION CHECKLIST

NOTE: Any “No” Answer Reflects Potential Difficulty, Either with Establishment Clause or Community Relations

1. Is the topic included in state or locally adopted curricular standards?
2. Do the curricular standards have a secular, non-religious purpose intended to teach about religion, such that, in context, curriculum reflects no appearance of endorsement of religious beliefs?
3. Does the teacher use sound instructional techniques consistent with state or locally adopted standards?
4. In context, do instructional techniques reflect no appearance of endorsement of religious beliefs?
 - a. Are techniques consistent with those used for other aspects of the curriculum?
 - b. Are techniques divorced from a “right and wrong” perspective and focused on teaching about religion rather than truth in religion?
 - c. Is there a “critical thinking” approach to controversial topics, separating a teacher from his or her perspective? Is this approach used for other controversial topics with a secular, non-religious purpose?
 - d. Is the focus on explicit curricular goals?
5. Does the teacher use materials approved by the state or consistent with local policy? Are local board policies regarding approval of materials up to date?
6. In context, do instructional materials reflect no appearance of endorsement of religious beliefs?
 - a. Are the materials prepared by school publishers for instructional purposes consistent with adopted curricular standards?
 - b. Is the selection of materials or intended to present a balanced and objective viewpoint?
 - c. Are multiple viewpoints presented?
7. Does the teacher provide notice to the administration of curricular and instructional decisions made before they are implemented?
 - a. Does district policy require notice and approval of instructional materials?
 - b. Does district policy require notice of potentially controversial topics?
8. Has the Board been involved with the issue?
 - a. In preparation of relevant policies?
 - b. Updated with potential for controversy and media exposure?
 - c. Aware of instructional and curricular decisions?
9. Does the District prepare the community and parents for the decisions being made? How?

10. Does the District have a policy on religion in schools?
 - a. Was the community involved in its preparation?
11. Are students given the opportunity to opt out of instruction not consistent with religious views?
12. Does the District have a policy for responding to media inquiry on controversial subjects?
 - a. Does the policy designate a single district spokesperson?
 - b. Does staff know about the policy?

End of McClusky School District #19 Exhibit GBAA-E