

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As part of our _____ class, we will be discussing
_____ on ____/____/____.

As you know, this issue is not without controversy, so I wanted to bring this to your attention in advance and to let you know that your student can opt for an alternative assignment [in the library] that day.

Discussing controversial current events can be tricky, but in my experience, students appreciate the opportunity to have their voices heard. These opportunities also teach respectful listening, and, as research confirms, improves their critical-thinking skills.

My approach to presenting controversial topics is rooted in the following:

- having students help establish discussion guidelines;
- assigning common and balanced background information gathering so that students have an established base of knowledge;
- having discussion be primarily student-driven, with prompt facilitation when needed;
- ensuring that students have the opportunity and comfort level to participate.

If for any reason this topic is difficult for your student, but he/she would like to participate, I would appreciate a heads-up. If you would like your student to opt out, please email me as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this letter. I am available to discuss this further with you in advance by phone or email.

