CODE: IMBC

ALTERNATIVES TO BIOLOGICAL DISSECTION

The Board recognizes that divergent opinions exist among parents and students regarding the appropriateness of using dissection as a means of achieving certain instructional goals in the biological sciences. Therefore, in order to ensure that legitimate objections to dissection are taken into account while at the same time protecting the integrity of the instructional program, the following procedure shall be observed:

A. In instances where students and/or parents object to dissection on ethical or moral grounds, a written request from the parents of the student wishing to be excused from dissection shall be submitted to the teacher in whose class the dissection is to occur. The request shall state the reasons for requesting that the student be excused from dissection;

B. The teacher, in consultation with the department head, shall review the request. (In instances where the department head is the teacher to whom the request is submitted or there is no department head, he/she shall consult with the school principal or their designee.) Those reviewing the request may wish to schedule an interview with the parent(s) and/or student in order to gain information needed to reach a decision;

C. If the request is approved, an alternative activity, closely related and of comparable rigor, will be assigned in lieu of the laboratory dissection. The alternatives may include such activities as computer simulations and research;

D. If the request is disapproved, the parent(s) may appeal the decision to a committee (comprised of the school principal, or his/her designee, the guidance counselor, and the teacher in whose class the dissection is to occur) which will review the request. The committee may wish to schedule an interview with the parent(s) and/or student in order to gain information needed to reach a decision;

E. The student will be responsible for and evaluated on the material covered in the alternative activity; and

F. The alternative activity will carry credit equivalent to the dissection activity.

1st Reading: 12/21/10
Adopted: 01/24/11