

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

603.1

Challenges to Instructional and/or Library/Media Materials

The Board of Education recognizes that objections by citizens/patrons may occasionally arise concerning the use of certain instructional and/or library media materials within the school. Such objection may also apply towards speakers or other related presentations within the school/classroom. In order to facilitate the processing of objections and/or challenges to certain materials, etc. used within classrooms/schools, the following guidelines will be followed:

Step I:

- A. Any person having a complaint or objection concerning the use of certain instructional or library/media materials shall be directed to the staff member responsible for the selection and/or use of the objectionable material in an effort to informally resolve the issue. The staff member shall explain the school's selection procedure and criteria for selection. The staff member shall advise the principal of the objection to the material no later than the end of the following school day.
- B. If the matter is not resolved with the staff member on an informal basis, the complainant shall be referred to the building principal in an effort to resolve the issue.

Step II:

- A. If the complainant is not satisfied at the building principal level, the complainant's next step is to file a formal written request on a district provided CITIZENS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND/OR LIBRARY MATERIALS form with the Superintendent of Schools.
- B. The Superintendent shall, within 5 school days, establish a *Reconsideration Committee, name a Chairperson and Secretary, and file with the Chairperson the material in question and a copy of the complaint.
- C. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the material may be temporarily removed at the discretion of the Superintendent.

***The Reconsideration Committee:**

1. The "Reconsideration Committee" shall be structured as follows- -
 - a. Four members of the community
 - b. The building principal
 - c. Two high school students selected by the building principal upon knowledge of the challenge (optional)
 - d. At least one school media person
2. Two teachers knowledgeable in the subject area of the challenged material The chairperson of the committee shall not be an employee or officer of the district. The secretary shall be an employee or officer of the district.
3. All members of the committee will have one equal vote, including the chairperson and secretary

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4. Any committee member who feels he/she may have any kind of conflict of interest with the complainant or the selection of the material, may ask to be excused from the committee. The Superintendent may at his/her discretion appoint a replacement to the committee, and such replacement should be of similar general qualifications as the excused person.

Step III:

- A. The Reconsideration Committee shall meet within 10 school days after receiving a copy of the challenge and the materials from the Superintendent.
 1. First Meeting
 - a. Distribute copies of the "Request" form completed by the complainant
 - b. Provide opportunity for the complainant to speak to the challenge, offering additional or clarifying comment to the challenge
 - c. Distribute reputable professionally prepared reviews of the materials as available
 - d. Distribute copies of the challenged material as available
 - e. Give person(s) responsible for the selection of the challenged material an opportunity to explain selection criteria and selection process and elaborate on the material(s)
 2. Subsequent Meetings
 - a. The committee may request individuals with special knowledge, including the complainant, be present to give pertinent information or share their views
 - b. The complainant shall be kept informed by the secretary concerning the status of the complaint throughout the reconsideration process
 - c. At the second or a subsequent meeting, as desired, the committee shall make its recommendation by a secret ballot vote. A simple majority vote will determine the committee's recommendation. The committee's final recommendation will be:
 - 1) to take no removal action;
 - 2) to remove the challenged material(s); or
 - 3) to limit the educational use of the challenged materials(s).If the ballot vote results in a tie, the lack of a recommendation shall be forwarded to the Superintendent as such for his/her decision. The sole criteria for the final recommendation is whether the material is appropriate for its intended educational use. The written recommendation and its justification, including vote count, shall be forwarded to the Superintendent and the complainant
 - d. The Superintendent will respond to the complainant and the committee with a decision in writing within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the committee's recommendation

Step IV: - -The Appeal Process

Following the Superintendent's decision, the complainant or the chairperson of the Reconsideration Committee may appeal the decision in writing within one month to the Board of Education for review. The appeal will be heard by the Board within one month following the filing of the appeal. Following the appeal hearing, the Board will decide whether to sustain the Superintendent's decision or to sustain the appellant's challenge.

Requests to reconsider materials previously brought before the committee must receive approval of a majority of the Board before the materials will be again considered.

Any person dissatisfied with the decision of the Board may appeal to the State Board of Education pursuant to state law.

Adopted: June 13, 2005
Revised: March 9, 2015