

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Controversial Issues

It is frequently necessary for pupils to study issues that are controversial. Students are to have access to all relevant information and may be exposed, at times, to what may appear to be biased or slanted instructional resources. Teachers will be expected to select such materials when such materials are the best means to meet specific curriculum objectives. The selection of instructional resources on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection of materials representing various points of view.

Challenged Materials

Purpose

Occasional objections to a selection may be made by the public, despite the careful consideration of materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of persons who select the materials. The following guidelines will be used to assist in determining the propriety of use of materials:

1. Factual, unbiased material which represents all major religions may be included in instructional materials.
2. Materials should present diversity of race, custom, culture, and belief as a positive aspect of our nation's heritage and give candid treatment to unresolved inter-cultural problems in the United States, including those which involve prejudice, discrimination, and the undesirable consequences of withholding rights, freedom, or respect from any individual.
3. Materials should reflect a sensitivity to the needs and rights of men and women without preference or bias. All materials should respect the claim of each person to all traits we regard as human.
4. School personnel shall, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available basic primary and factual material and information on the level of their reading public on any ideology or philosophy of government which exerts or has exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education, or any other phase of life.
5. Materials containing sexual terminology and profanity shall be subjected to a test of literary merit by delegated personnel, who will take into consideration their reading public and community standards of morality.

Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials (Continued)**Patron Complaints**

The following process will be used in dealing with complaints:

1. The complainant shall discuss the complaint with the teacher and/or building principal.
2. The complainant shall be invited to file objections in writing with the principal by completing the questionnaire, "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials," so that a formal complaint may be submitted to the instructional review committee.
3. Challenged materials will continue to be used during the reconsideration process unless the superintendent or school board suspends their use during the review process.
4. If, or when, a written complaint is filed, the building principal shall inform the superintendent.
5. An instructional review committee will be appointed by the director of instruction. This committee may consist of a media specialist, teacher(s), principal(s), parent(s), and students.
6. The director of instruction or designee shall serve as the chairperson of the committee. A recorder shall be selected to maintain accurate records of the proceedings of the committee. Proceedings of committee deliberations shall be held confidential.
7. The committee shall:
 - a. read, view, listen, and/or examine the material referred to it;
 - b. read reviews and consult recommended lists;
 - c. determine the extent to which the material supports the curriculum;
 - d. weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages pulled out of context;
 - e. decide on the continued use of the challenged material(s), considering instructional validity as perceived in the course objectives;
 - f. hold a hearing with the complainant(s) if a hearing is requested;
 - g. discuss the material and prepare a report including recommendations on the continued use or withdrawal of the material in question; and
 - h. file a copy of the report with the school principal, superintendent's office, and the complainant.

Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Material (continued)

8. The committee will be convened to render a decision regarding the complaint within 20 calendar days after a written complaint has been filed with the school principal.
9. If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the decision of the committee, appeal may be made in writing to the school board. Opportunity will be given to board members to read/review the material referred to the review committee.
10. The request for an appeal must take place within 30 calendar days of the decision of the committee.