

Board Policy

Code No. 605.3R1

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT REGULATION

- A. A member of the school district community may raise an objection to instructional materials used in the school district's education program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection and followed the proper procedure and observed the criteria for selecting such material.
1. The school official or employee receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials will try to resolve the issue informally. The materials generally will remain in use pending the outcome of the reconsideration procedure.
 - a. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the board's selection procedure, criteria to be met by the instructional materials, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material.
 - b. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the role of the objected material in the education program, its intended educational purpose, and additional information regarding its use. In the alternative, the employee may refer the individual to the teacher-librarian who can identify and explain the use of the material.
 2. The employee receiving the initial complaint will advise the building principal of the initial contact no later than the end of the school day following the discussion with the individual, whether or not the individual has been satisfied by the initial contact. A written record of the contact, 605.3E1, is maintained by the principal in charge of the attendance center. Each building principal shall inform employees of their obligation to report complaints.
 3. In the event the individual making an objection to instructional materials is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the individual is referred to the principal or to the teacher-librarian of the attendance center. If, after consultation with the principal or teacher-librarian, the individual desires to file a formal complaint, the principal or teacher-librarian will assist in filling out a Reconsideration Request Form, 605.3E2 in full and filing it with the superintendent.
- B. Request for Reconsideration
1. A member of the school district community may formally challenge instructional materials on the basis of appropriateness used in the school district's education program. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the school district and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.
 2. Each attendance center and the school district's central administrative office will keep on hand and make available Reconsideration Request Forms. Formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
 3. The individual will state the specific reason the instructional material is being challenged. The Reconsideration Request Form is signed by the individual and filed with the superintendent within 5 days of the original complaint.

4. The superintendent will promptly file the objection with the District Level Review committee for re-evaluation.
5. Generally, access to challenged instructional material will not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the instructional material may be removed temporarily by the recommendation of the superintendent.

C. District Level Review Committee

1. On receipt of the written complaint, the superintendent will:
 - a. Notify the assistant superintendent, and forward copies of the complaint to the building principal.
 - b. Inform the appropriate vertical curriculum chairperson, administrative advisor, and the staff member with whom the complaint originated.
2. The assistant superintendent, building principal, the vertical curriculum chairperson, the vertical curriculum administrative advisor, and staff member will meet to discuss the complaint. The assistant superintendent will plan the time and place for the meeting which will be held within three school days of the filing of the formal written request for "Reconsideration of Instructional Material" form.
3. The assistant superintendent, building principal, vertical curriculum chairperson, the vertical curriculum administrative advisor, and staff member will meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint within five school days after receipt of the written complaint. At this meeting, the complainant will have the opportunity to discuss the reason(s) for requesting reconsideration of the instructional material. In addition, the complainant will have the opportunity to discuss the complaint with the assistant superintendent, the vertical curriculum chairperson and the vertical curriculum administrative advisor who were not present at the informal meeting level. The complainant will be reminded at this time that the written complaint constitutes the case against the instructional material.
4. At the conclusion of this second meeting or within five school days after this second meeting, the complainant may withdraw the request for reconsideration of instructional material by notifying the assistant superintendent in writing.

C. The Reconsideration Committee

1. If the complaint is not withdrawn, the Superintendent, within two school days will appoint a committee to deal with the complaint.
The committee shall consist of:
 - a. The Assistant Superintendent, who will convene and chair these meetings and vote only as necessary to break a tie. The Assistant Superintendent shall also see to it that minutes of each meeting are recorded.
 - b. The building principal.
 - c. One teacher from the grade level and/or subject area, presently serving on the vertical curriculum committee in the area under question. The teacher should not be from the building involved, if possible.
 - d. One teacher from the grade level and/or subject area from the building where the complaint originated.

- e. Three parents from the District's Parent Executive Council; one from the building involved and two others from the council.
 - f. One high school student from the student council appointed by the student council advisor.
 - g. The appropriate vertical curriculum committee chairperson or administrative advisor of the subject area appointed by the Assistant Superintendent.
2. At least five school days prior to the committee meeting each member shall receive from the Assistant Superintendent the following:
 - a. A copy of the questioned material, as available;
 - b. Copies of pertinent reviews;
 - c. An evaluative checklist for members' use based on criteria set forth in Board Policy #605.3;
 - d. A copy of the written complaint;
 - e. Copies of appropriate Board policies and/or procedures, including 605.3E3 "Instructions from the Board to the Reconsideration Committee";
 - f. Copies of goals and objectives of the appropriate curricular areas.
 3. All members of the committee, and only members of the committee, must be present before a meeting can be opened. The complainant may request, or may be invited by the committee, to observe that portion of the first meeting at which the committee will review the written complaint.
 4. A minimum of two meetings of this committee must occur, and the challenged material can be judged no sooner than the second meeting. The material shall be judged as to its conformity to the selection criteria within the scope of Board Policy #605.1.

A copy of the minutes will be sent to each committee member following a meeting.

The second meeting may be waived only in the event that the complainant withdraws the complaint in writing following the initial meeting. Should this occur the Assistant Superintendent shall notify the Superintendent and the committee members in writing that there will be no second meeting.

5. The committee's final recommendation, based on majority vote, will be:
 - a. To take no removal action;
 - b. To take no removal action, but to allow students to use alternate titles approved by school personnel;
 - c. To agree on a limitation of the educational use of the material; or
 - d. To remove all or part of the challenged materials from the total school environment.
6. After a recommendation has been formed by the committee, the complainant will be notified of the date the recommendation will be submitted to the Board of Education. The complainant will be notified of the recommendation of the committee by a telephone call from the Assistant Superintendent; the recommendation and telephone notification will be confirmed in writing. A written report of the decision must be compiled and sent to the complainant, Superintendent, and the committee members.

7. The Board of Directors will receive, at the next regular Board meeting, the committee's recommendation. The complainant will be notified in writing by the Board Secretary within five school days of the action of the Board of Directors.
8. The final decision of the Board of Directors regarding the challenged instructional material shall be in effect for a period of three years.
9. Membership and work of the Reconsideration Committee will remain confidential throughout the entire process until a recommendation is presented to the Board of Directors.

Approved: August 1, 2011