

District Selection and Review of Instructional Materials

Selection Criteria

The professional staff by virtue of its preparation and experience has the special competencies that enable it to evaluate materials critically. The staff shall establish criteria for the selection and evaluation of materials appropriate for the various grade levels and subject areas.

Following are specific criteria to be used in selection of instructional materials including books, periodicals, pamphlets, motion pictures, slides, filmstrips, tapes, records, pictures, maps, globes, charts, games, transparencies, and models:

1. Content, style and organization which are consistent with the objectives and guidelines of the approved District program
2. Diversity in the types of materials to ensure applicability to a variety of instructional situations thereby increasing its chances of being more helpful and beneficial to a wider range of students
3. A style or format that is interesting and which will encourage interest in other sources of information and ideas as well as in the topic of that particular material
4. Cost which is realistic considering the purposes of the material and the fiscal resources of the District
5. Graphic illustrations and content which represent and reflect the diversity of cultures existing within our society and throughout the world
6. Reputation and significance of author/producer
7. Timeliness of subject
8. Importance of subject matter to the total educational program
9. Treatment of material
10. Quality of writing and illustrations
11. Format and/or technical excellence

The responsibility for the review, examination, and selection of instructional materials may be delegated by the Director of Curriculum to committees representative of the subject area, grade level, and buildings involved. The committee's recommendation shall be subject to review by the Director of Curriculum. In the event that a member of the community questions the inclusion of a specific instructional material in the educational program, the citizen should register the concern in writing in accordance with the following procedure.

Complaints can be resolved most expeditiously if they are taken first to the staff member or administrator immediately in charge of the area in which the problem arises, then through successive administrative levels to the Superintendent, and subsequently to the Board of School Directors, if necessary. Whenever a complaint dealing with the handling of controversial materials in the curriculum or in the classroom is made directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member as an individual, it shall be referred to the Superintendent for study and possible resolution through normal channels.

If a specific employee is involved because of the circumstances, that employee shall be advised of the nature of the complaint and shall be given every opportunity for explanation, comment, and presentation of the facts as that employee sees them.

Failing to reach a satisfactory resolution to the problem or complaint with the administrator immediately in charge of the area in which the problem arises, the complainant shall be encouraged to ask for review and further consideration through successive administrative levels to the Superintendent, and subsequently the Board, if necessary, as indicated below.

The administrator shall promptly provide the Superintendent with a written report including:

- A statement of the complaint prepared by the complainant and using the format appended to this Regulation.
- A summary of the positions taken on both sides of the matter during the study of the complaint.
- A summary of the opportunity afforded both sides to be heard.
- A statement on how the complainant would propose to resolve the matter.
- A statement of how the staff member(s) involved would propose to resolve the matter.
- A statement on how the complaint can best be resolved from the point of view of the administrator.

If the complaint has not been resolved at the building level, the Superintendent shall establish a review committee composed of the Director of Curriculum and five or more members selected from the administrative and instructional areas directly concerned.

In their deliberations, the review committee shall consider the educational philosophy of the District, the professional opinions of other teachers of the same subject and of other competent authorities, reviews of the materials by reputable bodies, the teacher's own stated objectives in using the materials, and the objections of the complainant.

The findings of the review committee shall be made in writing and be transmitted to the Superintendent who will make a decision on the course of action to take and the appropriate response to the complainant.

The Superintendent shall submit the reports from the building level and District review committee, along with their recommendation, if Board involvement becomes necessary to resolve the complaint.

An individual student may be excused from class activities involving the book or materials in question. The teacher will then assign the student alternate activities of equal merit. Although individuals may be excused from the activity, the continuation of the activity by class, school or District shall not be restricted until final disposition has been made in accordance with this Regulation.

Request for Reconsideration of
Books or Other Instructional Material

This is the format we request to ensure smooth, expeditious consideration of a complaint that a book or other instructional material is inappropriate for use in the curriculum. We realize there is not enough space to respond adequately to these questions and would prefer that you use other sheets, following this format.

Author _____ Type of Materials _____
(books, filmstrip, record, etc.)

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

City, Town, Village _____ Zip Code _____

Complainant represents:

_____ self
_____ name of organization _____
_____ other (identify) _____

1. To what do you object in this material: (Please be specific, citing pages)

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading this material?

3. Did you read or view materials in the entirety? _____ What parts? _____

4. Do you perceive any instructional value in this material? _____

5. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by professionals or critics in the field? _____

6. What do you believe is the theme of this material? _____

7. What would you like the school district to do about this material?

_____ Do not assign it to my child
_____ Make it an optional assignment
_____ Withdraw it from all pupils
_____ Re-evaluate its worthiness

8. What alternative would you recommend in its place? _____

Enclosure: Regulation 6160, "Selection of Instructional Materials"