

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

EFA
(REGULATION)

SELECTION OF
LEARNING
RESOURCES

Learning resources used in the classroom include those adopted by the state, provided by the Regional Service Center, purchased by the District, or others utilized on a limited and specific basis in supplementing the curriculum.

Independent professional review and/or examination should be conducted by the professional who is to use the materials. Learning resources selected for use shall align with the District's curriculum or should support recreational reading for the students.

Any question related to the suitability of the material(s) should be referred to the team leader/department chairperson/ library media specialist/appropriate campus supervisor. Approval for use of the questionable material(s) must be obtained from the department chairperson or appropriate campus supervisor before the use of the material(s). If there is a further question regarding use, then the approval should be referred to the principal or principal's designee.

CRITERIA FOR
SELECTION

It is the responsibility of individuals utilizing materials provided either by the District or by an outside source to follow the criteria listed in policy EFA (LOCAL) in selecting such materials for use.

The following specific criteria should be considered in selecting instructional materials:

1. Authenticity
 - a. Have the credentials of the author been verified?
 - b. Is the representation of the subject accurate and factual?
2. Appropriateness
 - a. Are materials pertinent to the curriculum or objectives of the instructional program?
 - b. Has the content of the material been reviewed for potentially sensitive issues?

SELECTION OF
LIBRARY
RESOURCES

Library resources should be selected using professional review journals and core collections such as:

1. *School Library Journal* (Reed Elsevier, Inc.)
2. *Booklist* (ALA)
3. *Horn Book* (The Horn Book, Inc.)
4. *Children's Catalog* (H. W. Wilson)
5. *Elementary School Library Collection* (Brodart)
6. *The Middle and Junior High School Library Catalog* (H. W. Wilson)
7. *The Senior High School Library Catalog* (H. W. Wilson)

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INFORMAL
RECONSIDERATION

The school receiving the complaint regarding a learning resource shall attempt to resolve the issue informally by:

1. Notifying the library media specialist (LMS), the principal, and the lead library media specialist that a particular material has been challenged, so that he or she can examine the material and review its history on the campus. The lead library media specialist will verify and determine if the material has been reviewed within the last three years. This notification should be made, even if the material in question is not from the Library Media Center (LMC).
2. Conducting a conference to discuss the situation with the complainant which should include the teacher involved, the team leader/department chairperson, the library media specialist, a campus administrator, and other persons deemed necessary by the principal.
3. If the complainant wishes to file a formal challenge, a copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials" form (Exhibit A) shall be handed or mailed to the complainant by the principal or designee, who shall then:
 - a. Notify the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction when a formal campus appeal has been initiated.
 - b. Withhold any official actions or position statements until the completed "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials" form is received and reviewed by the reconsideration committee.
 - c. Inform all parties that the challenged material will not be removed from the collection during this reconsideration process.

Any resident or employee of the District may formally challenge learning resources used in the District's educational program on the basis of its appropriateness in accordance with this regulation.

REQUEST FOR
FORMAL
RECONSIDERATION

LEVEL I

The following shall apply:

1. All formal complaints regarding learning resources shall be submitted on the "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials" form. The form shall be signed by the complainant and filed with the principal within 15 business days of the date the complainant first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the learning resource giving rise to the complaint. The principal will forward a copy to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the date of receipt shall be recorded.
2. Upon receipt of the completed form, the principal shall appoint a reconsideration committee.
3. The principal will send a copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials" to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the appropriate lead library media specialist.

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COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP

The Reconsideration Committee at Level I should consist of the following members:

1. Two classroom teachers (with at least one from the appropriate subject area).
2. Two parent representatives.
3. The campus library media specialist.
4. The principal or designee, who will chair the committee as a non-voting member.

The total voting committee membership should be an uneven number. The complainant will not be a member of the committee and will be allowed to address the committee by written communication only.

PROCEDURES

Within 30 school days from the receipt of the signed reconsideration form from the complainant, the committee will meet, review the material, and complete its written report using the "Checklist for Reconsideration of Instructional Resources." [See Exhibit B] Prior to the meeting, each committee member shall read/examine the material in question.

The Reconsideration Committee will meet and follow these procedures:

1. The chairperson will inform the committee members of the general nature of the complaint.
2. All committee members and the chairperson shall review the actual written complaint.
3. Review the District's criteria for selection of instructional resources.
4. Consider the audience's/student's grade or maturity level.
5. Discuss whether the challenged material conforms to the principles outlined in policy and in this regulation.
6. Consider evaluations of the material by reading reviews and consulting sources of recommendation.
7. Consider the extent to which the material supports and/or enriches the curriculum or is a source for recreational reading.
8. Consider both the positive and negative effects that continued use of the resource might have at the campus level.
9. Complete the "Checklist for Reconsideration of Instructional Resources" and present it to the principal. If at least two members do not agree, a minority opinion checklist should also be presented to the principal.

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10. Recommend, when appropriate and when the committee has agreed to remove the item from the campus' collection, that a central committee review the reconsideration request to determine whether a particular instructional resource should be removed from all libraries and/or classrooms within the District.

PRINCIPAL'S
ACTIONS

The principal or principal's designee shall:

1. Advise the complainant of the committee's decision. The decision shall be in written form, dated, and mailed to the complainant by certified mail with return receipt requested. The decision of the committee shall be provided to the complainant in writing within ten (10) business days of the meeting. In the letter explaining the committee's decision (Exhibit C), the complainant will be notified of his/her right to appeal the decision within ten (10) business days of receipt and that he/she may obtain the necessary form for that appeal from the campus principal.
2. Send copies of the committee report(s) to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and lead library media specialists.

APPEAL OF
CAMPUS-BASED
DECISION

An appeal of the campus-based decision at Level I may be made to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction within ten (10) business days of receipt of the committee's decision. An "Appeal Request for Instructional Resources" form (Exhibit D) is provided for this purpose. The form should be completed by the complainant and turned in to the office of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

DISTRICT-LEVEL
APPEAL

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction will convene a committee within 20 school days of the receipt of a written request to consider the appeal of the campus-based decision.

LEVEL II

COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP

The District-level instructional materials committee will consist of the following representatives:

1. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction who will chair the meeting as a non-voting member;
2. A campus administrator;
3. A District-level curriculum administrator;
4. The appropriate lead library media specialist;
5. A teacher; and
6. A parent.

The total voting committee membership should be an uneven number. The complainant will not be a member of the committee but will be allowed to address the committee by written communication. Prior to the committee meeting, each committee member will read/examine a copy of the material in question.

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PROCEDURES

The Reconsideration Committee will follow these procedures:

1. The chairperson will inform the committee of the general nature of the complaint.
2. All committee members and the chairperson shall review the actual written complaint.
3. The committee will review all items on the "Checklist for Reconsideration of Instructional Resources" completed by the campus committee (Level I). The committee will determine if each of the concerns expressed by the complainant was addressed adequately.
4. If at least two members do not agree with the previous committee's decision then a minority opinion checklist should also be presented to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

When the committee has reached a decision, the chairperson will notify the complainant. The decision shall be in written form, dated, and provided to the complainant within ten (10) business days of the committee's meeting by certified mail with return receipt requested. This notification will also inform the complainant of the right to appeal to the Board. In the letter explaining the committee's decision (Exhibit D), the complainant will be notified of his/her right to appeal the decision to the Board, and he/she will be provided with a copy of the form for that appeal (Exhibit E). A copy of the written notification will also be sent to the principal.

The decision of the District-level committee is binding on the individual school. However, if the committee feels it is warranted, it shall recommend the removal of a particular instructional resource from all campuses in the District.

BOARD-LEVEL
APPEAL

A complainant may appeal the decision of the District-level committee at Level II to the Board of Trustees. In order to do so, the complainant must file a written request with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction within ten (10) business days of receipt of the District-level committee's decision.

LEVEL III

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction will inform the complainant of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for the Board to consider. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction will submit the written request and copies of all pertinent records from previous levels to the Board with adequate time for review prior to meeting. The Board will be given copies of the material in question to read/examine upon request.

The Board's decision will be based upon the record created at Levels I and II. The Board may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If for any reason the Board fails to reach a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level II.

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RECONSIDERATION The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the lead librarian media specialists will maintain a record of all formal complaints filed and considered at the campus and/or District level. Materials reviewed within a three-year period need not be considered again unless special circumstances warrant reconsideration. Schools should verify previous decisions prior to convening a reconsideration committee.