



Davis School District School Libraries PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSE TO CONCERNS & CHALLENGES

Informal complaints can occur at any time, and every library has a process for handling concerns. Library workers and educators who receive expressions of concern should courteously refer them to the person responsible for responding to concerns (school librarian and school principal), who should take the following steps:

❖ DSD PRINCIPAL FAQs ❖

1. HOW SHOULD I REACT WHEN FACED WITH A CONCERN OR CHALLENGE: Work with your librarian to respond to the concern/challenge appropriately as the principal of your school. A parent/guardian with a complaint should feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously. Try to elicit the specific reason for their concern, whether they have read the entire work or only parts, and the specific action they would like the library/school to take.

2. WHAT SHOULD PRINCIPALS KNOW ABOUT ACQUIRING LIBRARY MATERIALS:

2.1 Acquisition

2.1.1 The selection of library resources and materials shall be done by library professionals at each school site using guidelines and criteria developed under the direction of the District Library Media Supervisor (District Supervisor) and approved by the Assistant Superintendent over Curriculum and Instruction: The criteria shall include at a minimum:

- a. relationship to or support of curriculum;
- b. developmental/maturity level of students;
- c. format;
- d. accuracy;
- e. timeliness;
- f. reliability;
- g. provision of balanced views;
- h. recreational needs of students;
- i. linguistic pluralism for both English language learners and foreign language programs;
- j. literary quality; and
- k. quality of illustrations.

2.1.2 Requests and suggestions of students, parents, and faculty which fit these criteria may also be considered.

3. HOW SHOULD I RESPOND TO A CONCERN OR CHALLENGE: Do not promise to act or appear to agree with the individual. Consult with your School Director, District Library Media Supervisor (District Supervisor), and your librarian and offer assistance in finding something else that would better meet the student's needs.

4. WHAT ARE A PARENT'S RIGHTS TO RESTRICT A STUDENT'S ACCESS TO MATERIALS: If the individual is concerned about a children's or young adult resource, explain that parents and guardians play a major role in guiding their child's reading and library use. Explain that each family has the right to determine which library resources are acceptable for its children and must accord the same right to other parents. Work with your librarian to restrict the student's access to the requested materials. Be sure those items are restricted appropriately, and that the parent notified when completed.

5. WHAT IF THE PARENT MERELY EXPRESSES A VERBAL/EMAIL CONCERN: Many expressions of concern end after the individual has had an opportunity to express personal feelings about a library resource. The person only wanted to be heard and have his opinions acknowledged. No further action is needed. If this is the case, thank the person for their interest, make notes about the conversation, and file them for future reference. Additionally, report the conversation to the District Supervisor.

6. WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER A FORMAL/WRITTEN CHALLENGE IS MADE: Often a parent's/guardian's concern about a children's or young adult book involves a desire to "protect all children" by removing that item from the collection or restricting access to it. If the concerned parent/guardian is not satisfied during the discussion and wants the item removed, explain the formal challenge process, the location of the "[School Level Challenge of Library Media Materials](#)" form, and a timeline. Often parents/guardians who have a concern would like immediate action and are not aware of the length of time this procedure takes (acquire books, distribute to committee, reading

time, meeting/discussion, etc.). State what your policy says about the availability of the material during the reconsideration process. Best practice is that the resource under reconsideration will not be removed from use or have access restricted pending completion of the process. (Sample Principal Response Letter Available)

7. WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE CHALLENGE/REVIEW PROCESS: Work with your librarian to notify committee members of the challenge. Follow DSD Policy:

4.1 School Level Challenge

4.1.1 A parent desiring action beyond restricting their own child's access to a particular book or material contained in the library media center of the school his/her child attends may challenge the placement of the item through the Challenge of Library Media Materials process.

4.1.2 The parent must submit a completed ["School Level Challenge of Library Media Materials"](#) Form to the school's library media professional. The Form may be obtained from the school's library professional or from the link at the end of the policy, [4I-202 School Library Media Centers](#).

4.1.2 Upon receipt of the completed Form, the library professional will notify the District Supervisor of the request and call a meeting of the Collection Evaluation Committee ("School Committee") to introduce the request.

4.1.3 The material in question will remain in use during the challenge process.

4.1.4 The school library professional will provide School Committee members access to the challenged material as well as public written reviews of the material from professional review sources. The School Committee members will be assigned to read, view, or listen to the material in its entirety as well as the reviews.

4.1.5. After being afforded time to review the material and reviews, the School Committee will reconvene, at which time the parent has the option to meet with the School Committee to present his/her views. The School Committee will then dismiss the parent.

4.1.6 The School Committee will deliberate the issues and reach a decision. A decision is made by a majority vote. The School Committee will decide whether to retain the material in the library media center, relocate the material within the library media center, or remove the material from the library media center.

4.1.7 The parent will be notified of the School Committee's decision in writing within a reasonable time.

4.1.8 The same material cannot be challenged at that particular school for at least three years.

8. WHO SHOULD BE UPDATED ON ALL INQUIRIES/CHALLENGES DURING THE RECONSIDERATION PROCESS: Keep your School Director and the District Supervisor informed of any concerns expressed, whether you feel they have been successfully resolved or not. Make sure the parent/guardian filing the form understands the process and the part they will play in the reconsideration. Knowing that a concern was expressed helps the District Supervisor respond knowledgeably if the concerned person contacts them.

Draft: Response to parent submission of School-level challenge of Library Media Materials

Dear Mr./Ms. ____ (name)____,

We have received your School-level Challenge of Library Materials for specific materials in the ____ (school)____ Library Media Center. We have an established procedure for reviewing your request, and we will begin that process as soon as possible. Since the review committee will read the challenged materials in their entirety, the process will take some time. After the committee's initial review, you will have the option of meeting with the committee to share your concerns. When the committee has concluded their work, you will be notified of the decision in writing.

We appreciate your patience as we work through this process. In the meantime, you may request that the school librarian restrict access to specific materials for your own students. This request can be submitted via email to the school librarian. There is no committee review or other approval process for this type of parental request, so such requests are typically processed quickly. This will allow us to immediately address your concerns for your students.

For additional information on the process, please see the district policy governing library media centers which is available here: <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1604602538/davisk12utus/si7y9rqfz40bdxdfzb-ka/4I-202SchoolLibraryMediaCenters.pdf>

Thank you,