

Board of Trustees Douglas County School District

PROGRAM

CHALLENGES AND/OR OBJECTIONS TO TEXTBOOKS/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Opinions differ and, in a democracy, there may be criticisms of the most carefully selected material.

In order to properly consider and reply to any challenge regarding textbooks/instructional materials selected for use in the District, the Superintendent will develop a formal challenge procedure, which can be utilized by parents, school and/or other community members.

Recognizing the occasional desire of parents and/or citizens to challenge the use of certain textbooks/instructional materials currently being utilized within the District, the following challenge procedure has been developed.

Informal Stage: The parent, school or community member shall discuss the material in question with the staff member who is utilizing the material. The goal of this activity is to resolve the issue on an informal basis.

Step 1: If the challenge is not resolved through the informal procedure noted above, the challenge shall be submitted to the appropriate site administrator. The principal shall explain to the complainant the school's selection procedure and criteria. The principal shall explain the particular place the material occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use. In the event the complainant is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the complainant should be invited to file with the school district a formal request for reconsideration and provide him with a [Challenge of Textbooks/Instructional Materials form](#) which was developed and distributed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The complainant must complete and sign the form so that a reply can be given. A copy will be given to the school principal and the Assistant Director of Education Services.

Step 2: The material in question may remain in use by the school until a committee selected by the Board of Trustees, or their designee, completes a review. The committee shall consist of two teachers (teachers not using the material being challenged), two parents serving on an active school organization, a librarian, a student, if appropriate, and the site administrator.

Both the complainant and the staff member utilizing the material(s) in question will have an opportunity to address the site-level committee. The committee shall consider the challenged material in its entirety with both the specific objections and the context of the objections in mind.

The Assistant Director of Education Services will provide continuity to the committee, activating the committee, scheduling meetings, securing copies of reviews and copies of the challenged materials for the members to consider. The Assistant Director of Education Services will serve as the chairperson and resource person to the committee but will not serve as a voting member.

The committee shall also consult reviews of the materials from standard sources. It is the responsibility of the committee to check general acceptance of the material by reading reviews in publications such as: The American Library Association, National Council of Teachers of English, H.W. Wilson catalog series, American Association of Advancement of Science, National Education Association and the Association for Education, Communication and Technology. The members, in making a decision, shall consider the best interest of the pupils, the requirements of the curriculum, and the principles of freedom of speech and the right to a redress of grievances inherent in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and expressed in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement as disseminated by the American Library Association. District Staff will also be consulted in order to provide a rationale for the continued use of the challenged material in the event the committee wants continued use. The committee shall make its decision by a simple majority.

The committee's final decision will be:

1. Leave the material in place with no changes;
2. Amend the material in some fashion; or
3. Remove the material from use.

The report of this committee shall be completed and reported publicly within thirty (30) school days, and a written reply shall be made to the individual who initiated the challenge procedure.

Step 3: If either the complainant or the staff member using the material does not agree with the findings of the school-level committee, he/she may appeal the decision by filing a written statement with the Executive Director of Education Services within ten (10) school days following the receipt of the findings. The Executive Director of Education Services shall then consider the original textbooks/instructional materials challenge and the finding of the school-level committee. The committee, the complainant, and the staff member utilizing the material will be notified of the Executive Director of Education Service's decision within twenty (20) school days after the notice of appeal is filed.

Step 4: If the complainant or the staff member utilizing the material does not agree with the decision of the Executive Director of Education Services, he/she may file a written statement of appeal to the Superintendent. The written appeal must be made within ten (10) school days. The matter will then be presented to the Board of Trustees, whose decision will be final.

Step 5: If the complaint is based upon noncompliance by a school district with its written procedures, and all administrative remedies have been exhausted at the school district level, the complainant may appeal directly to the Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction.

See Policy related to this Administrative Regulation See also: Administrative Regulations 219(a), 219(c), 219(d)

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