PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING QUESTIONED OR CHALLENGED SCHOOL LIBRARY MATERIALS **Admin. Reg. IS-38.1**
November 2022

I. Purpose. This administrative regulation establishes the Superintendent's expectations regarding procedures for receiving and handling questioned or challenged school library materials in the Beaufort County School District (BCSD).

II. Non-Discrimination. The BCSD affirms the right of all individuals to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and/or harassment. The BCSD is committed to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all students, parents/legal guardians, staff, visitors, applicants for admission and employment, personnel, and community members who participate or seek to participate in its educational programs or activities. Accordingly, the BCSD does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions, color, physical or mental disability, age (40 or older), ancestry, genetic information, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by Title VI, Title VII, Title IX or any other local, state, or federal law.

III. Reconsideration of School Library Materials.

A. All BCSD employees are charged with the responsibility of upholding the principle of intellectual freedom rather than defending a selected educational resource.

B. The BCSD shall be operated to promote academic freedom, the student's right to read, and the fair and reasonable competition of ideas and information. School officials may not broadly remove books from a school library based on "narrowly partisan or political" grounds that may violate students' first amendment rights to receive information and ideas.

C. Under exigent circumstances, BCSD district administrators reserve the right to institute an Administrative Review Committee to conduct a review.

D. The reconsideration process should conserve limited staff resources, discourage the monopolization of the challenge process by a few individuals, and require complainants to submit complete, substantive, and fully researched challenge requests.

IV. Rights to Challenge. Any BCSD student or employee, any parent/legal guardian of a BCSD student, and any person residing in a BCSD attendance zone may challenge specific materials found in school libraries.

A. The BCSD recognizes the right of a parent/legal guardian to ask that particular school library materials not be made available to their own children, by completing the, "Request to Opt-Out of School Library Materials Form," attached to this Administrative Regulation as Attachment 1. This form is also available on the BCSD website and at the school site.

B. Complainants may request the addition of, removal of, restriction of, or expanded access to the school library materials by completing the, "Request For Reconsideration Of School Library Materials Form," attached to this Administrative Regulation as Attachment 2. This form is also available on the BCSD website and at the school site.

C. In reviewing challenges, priority will be given to:

- Challenges filed by BCSD students (or their parents/legal guardians) who are currently and directly affected by the use of specific materials.

- Challenges filed by BCSD teachers or school/district administrators whose students are currently and directly affected by the use of specific materials.

V. School-Site Reconsideration Procedure. Upon receiving a complaint, the school administrator (or their designee) should schedule an informal conference with the complainant and the school librarian or teacher concerned. If the complaint cannot be resolved satisfactorily during this informal conference, the following options are made available:

A. If a student (or their parent/legal guardian) objects to specific materials located in a school or classroom library, they may request alternative instructional materials using the "Request to Opt-Out of School Library Materials Form". The school administrator or their designee shall communicate this request to the student's teachers, school librarian, and other staff as necessary.

B. If the complainant would like to request any change that broadly affects access to the material in question, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The school administrator or their designee should explain the steps of the reconsideration process to the complainant. Without making any specific commitments which would affect general access to the material in question, the school administrator/designee should assure the complainant and any involved parties that BCSD policy will be followed. The material in question will be removed from general use throughout the BCSD during the reconsideration process.

2. Complainants wishing to file a formal materials challenge should do so by completing the, "Request For Reconsideration Of School Library Materials Form," in its entirety, returning a copy to the district Chief Instructional Services Officer or designee. A separate form must be completed for each material being requested for reconsideration. The form attached to this administrative regulation, shall be posted prominently on the district website, and available upon request at schools.

C. To evaluate the challenged material(s), the Superintendent or designee shall appoint a Materials Reconsideration Committee which may be composed of an odd number of the following individuals:

1. At least one teacher with expertise in the content area and grade level;

2. At least one school librarian;

3. At least one school administrator;

4. At least one parent representing a school family other than the complainant;

5. At least one community member;

6. At least one district-level director or coordinator with expertise in the content area; and

7. At least one member of a School Improvement Council within the district/school;

D. When possible, each member of the Materials Reconsideration Committee should represent different schools, and none should be employed at the school for which the request has been filed. At the discretion of the Superintendent, exceptions to this rule may be made for material that is widely available at most BCSD schools.

E. BCSD Materials Reconsideration Committee and Administrative Review Committee will use the "Beaufort County School District Reconsideration Committee Checklist" attached to this Administrative Regulation as Attachment 3.

VI. Materials Reconsideration Committee.

A. The Materials Reconsideration Committee will study the complainant's submissions on the, "Request For Reconsideration Of School Library Materials Form," read/examine the referenced materials in full, and meet as a group to share and discuss their findings. The value of any material must be examined as a whole. The impact of an entire work will be considered, transcending individual words, phrases, and incidents

B. The Materials Reconsideration Committee shall complete its review and issue a written report within fifteen (15) business days of initial receipt of the formal complaint. A copy of the report shall be sent to the complainant, the Superintendent, and the Board of Education.

C. If the Materials Reconsideration Committee recommends any changes regarding access to the material in question (such as the addition/removal of the material) the Superintendent or designee will be responsible for communicating those changes to the appropriate personnel who shall ensure that such changes are made in a timely manner.

D. If the Materials Reconsideration Committee recommends the material in question be removed, the BCSD must ensure no other copies exist in school library circulation within the BCSD for the school level(s) it has been recommended for removal.

E. If the Materials Reconsideration Committee recommends the material in question is acceptable, the BCSD must immediately place such materials back into circulation.

F. Appropriateness of a book or reading material cannot be challenged again until the expiration of five (5) years from the original challenge date.

VII. Administrative Review Committee. BCSD reserves the right to appoint an Administrative Review Committee, and to conduct a review of school library materials. The Administrative Review Committee members will consist:

1. At least one teacher with expertise in the content area and grade level;
2. At least one school librarian;
3. At least one school administrator;
4. At least one district-level director or coordinator with expertise in the content area;
5. At least one parent;
6. At least one community member;
7. At least one member of the School Improvement Council within the district/school; and

VIII. Appeals Process. Complainants wishing to appeal the decision of the Materials Reconsideration Committee must do so, in writing, to the Board of Education within seven (7) business days of receipt of the committee's decision. After reviewing the committee's report on the material in question, the Board of Education will make a determination regarding the material in question within fifteen (15) business days effective from the date the appeal is requested.

Adopted: June, 2022; November, 2022

Legal references:

A. Federal legislation:
   1. Copyright Act of 1976, Title 17 USC Section 101 *et seq.*, effective January 1, 1978.
   2. 20 U.S.C. Code, Section 1232h, as amended

B. S. C. Code, 1976, as amended:
   1. Section 59-31-10 - Library committee.

C. South Carolina Department of Education Standards for School Library Resource Collections.

D. South Carolina Department of Education Model Policy for Library/Media Center Materials Selection and Reconsideration Process.

E. Beaufort County Schools Coherent Governance Manual:
   1. GC-1 Board Purpose.
   2. GC-2 Governing Commitments (GC 2.1, 2.2, 2.3).
   3. GC-3 Board Job Description (GC-3.4.b.c.d., 3.17).
   4. GC-6 Annual Work Plan.
   5. GC-11 Diversity Statement and Goals.
   6. B/SR-4 Authority of the Superintendent.
   7. B/SR-5.8 Superintendent Accountability.
   8. OE-1 Global Operational Expectation.
   9. OE-3 Treatment of Stakeholders (OE-3.1, 3.3).
   10. OE-10 Communicating with the Board (OE-10.1, 10.2, 10.4, 10.6, 10.12, 10.16).
   11. OE-11 Communicating with the Public (OE-11.1, 11.2.a.b.c).
   12. OE-12 Instructional Program.
   13. OE-16 FOIA (OE-16.1, 16.2).

Attachment 1

Request to Opt-Out of School Library Materials Form
Beaufort County School District
2900 Mink Point Boulevard
Beaufort, SC 29901

THIS FORM IS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN MAKING THE REQUEST

Directions: Please complete this form and submit to the school administrator/designee. Requests will be considered incomplete until the return of this form.

Contact Information of Parent/Legal Guardian Initiating Request

Name: _____ Telephone: (_____)_____

Mailing Address: _____ City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Details of Material

Title of Material: _____ Author/Creator: _____

Material Type: _____ Publication Year: _____ School Location: _____

Material Located in: ☐ School Library ☐ Other _____

What, specifically, are you requesting?
You must be the parent or legal guardian of the child for which you are making this request.

☐ Do not assign/lend the specific material named above to my child.

☐ Do not allow my child to check out any materials from school libraries without my prior approval of the specific material in question.

☐ Other _____

Attachment 2

Request For Reconsideration Of School Library Materials Form
Beaufort County School District
2900 Mink Point Boulevard
Beaufort, SC 29901

THIS FORM IS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CITIZEN MAKING THE REQUEST
In order for your challenge to be processed, you must respond completely to all the following questions:

Contact Information of Citizen Initiating Request

Requested Initiated By: _____ Telephone: (_____)_____

Mailing Address: _____ City/State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Details of Material

Title of Material: _____ Author/Creator: _____

Material Type: _____ Publication Year: _____ School Location: _____

Material Located in: ☐ School Library ☐ Other _____

1. Have you discussed the material in question with the principal and school staff member(s)?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Date & Location of Conference _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention? _____

3. Did you read or study the entire body of the material before initiating this request? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   If you have read or viewed the material, please summarize it in the space below:

4. Are students *required* to use this material? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I'm not sure
   If the material was used as part of a specific activity or assignment, please summarize the purpose of that assignment as you understand it.

5. To what in the material do you object? Please cite page numbers, quotes, or specific information from the material which supports your objections. Feel free to attach additional pages, if needed.

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

7. How has this material been assessed by others who have read it? Please include any reviews, particularly by educators or professional literary critics, which support your objections.

8. How do you perceive students would be affected by this material?

9. In its place, what material of equal educational quality or literary merit could you recommend that would provide additional information or viewpoints on this topic?

10. For what grades would you recommend this material? ☐ PK-2 ☐ 3-5 ☐ 6-8 ☐ 9-12 ☐ None

11. What would you like the school district to do about this material?
    - ☐ Do not assign or provide this material to my child
    - ☐ Have the Materials Reconsideration Committee re-evaluate the inclusion of this material in school libraries
    - ☐ Other: _____

_____ _____
Signature of citizen Date

Attachment 3

BEAUFORT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE CHECKLIST

Committee Number: _____ Date _____

Name of Novel _____

Directions: After reading the selected novel, review the material using the below criteria. Note upon review of the book the following Beaufort County School District Non Discrimination will be taken into consideration:

Non-Discrimination. The BCSD affirms the right of all individuals to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and/or harassment. The BCSD is committed to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all students, parents/legal guardians, staff, visitors, applicants for admission and employment, personnel, and community members who participate or seek to participate in its educational programs or activities. Accordingly, the BCSD does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions, color, physical or mental disability, age (40 or older), ancestry, genetic information, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by Title VI, Title VII, Title IX or any other local, state, or federal law.

EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE	**Check all that apply**
The novel supports the BCSD's mission, vision, and goals.	
The novel directly supports the acquisition of related standards. (Educational Significance)	
The novel contributes to improved academic achievement for a variety of learners and learning styles.	
The novel promotes the integration of higher-level thinking skills.	
The novel reflects the needs/interests of the school and the culture of the school community.	
The novel/material adds value to the library/school collection.	
The novel reflects a clear, adequate, and broad presentation of the content.	
Evidence from the text or standards relating to EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:	

QUALITY, CONTENT, MANNER OF PRESENTATION	**Check all that apply**

The novel is to be engaging and able to meet a variety of student needs. Meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation to include, but not limited to: i. No errors, validity, accuracy; ii. Objectivity; iii. Well written; and iv. Strong visual appeal.	
Ensure reputation and significance of author and producer.	
The novel/material contains a value/currency commensurate with cost.	
The novel/material has high artistic quality, and/or literary style.	
The novel/material avoids bias and adheres to standards of sensitivity relative to student race, sex, religion, culture, ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status.	
Ensure that the novel/material contains clarity adequacy, and scope of text.	
The presentation of contents is organized in a manner that provides clarity and ease to the reader.	
The novel/material ensures a high degree of readability and/or comprehensibility.	
Evidence from the text relating to QUALITY:	

AVOIDANCE OF PERVASIVE VULGARITY	Check all that apply
When considered as a whole, the novel does not appeal to sexual interest in a shameful way.	
The novel does not depict or describe sexual conduct in a clearly offensive way.	
The novel abides by prevailing standards in the adult community in regard to suitable material for minors.	
The novel is free from graphic depictions of sexual activity.	
Evidence from the text relating to PERVASIVE VULGARITY:	

APPROPRIATENESS	K-5	6-8	9-12
The novel is appropriate to the age and grade level of students.			
The novel is appropriate to the maturity level of students.			
The novel is appropriate to the content area.			
The novel/material reflects the contemporary community standards.			
Evidence from the text relating to APPROPRIATENESS:			

BEAUFORT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Official Vote by Committee

Committee Number: _____ **Date _____**

Name of Novel _____

All ballots are confidential and anonymous. Based on the rubric rating and evidence presented.

- Challenged material should be returned to school library circulation.

- Challenged material returned to the school library circulation, only for certain age groups, content areas, or grade levels.
  Select
  - K-5
  - 6-8
  - 9-12

- Removed the challenged material in its entirety.