

ARTICLE V: INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

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POLICY 6-5.1 SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS

Definition of Service Domains

Pursuant to the Standards of Quality, the following guidance and counseling services are available to all students in Poquoson City Public Schools:

1. Academic guidance and counseling that assist students and their parents in acquiring knowledge of the curricula choices available to students, including planning a program of studies, arranging and interpreting academic testing, and seeking post-secondary educational and career opportunities.
2. Career guidance and counseling that help students to acquire information and plan action about work, jobs, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities.
3. Personal/social guidance and counseling that assist students in developing an understanding of themselves and the rights and needs of others, resolving conflict and defining individual goals that reflect their interests, abilities and aptitudes.
4. Employment counseling and placement services which furnish information relating to the employment opportunities available to students graduating from or leaving the public schools. Such information will be provided to secondary students and will include all types of employment opportunities, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, the military, career education schools, and the teaching profession. In providing such services, the School Board will consult and cooperate with the Virginia Employment Commission, the Department of Labor and Industry, local business and labor organizations, and career schools.

Types of Service Delivery

These services are provided through:

1. Classroom Guidance: a series of classroom lessons conducted by the school guidance counselor in the classroom for all students at each grade level.
2. Small Group Counseling: available to students experiencing specific and commonly shared concerns. Emphasis is on problem solving and the development of positive and effective personal skills.
3. Individual Counseling: direct assistance to individual students. Counseling of individual students is conducted to help them learn more efficiently and effectively with emphasis on identifying concerns early before they interfere with learning.

Procedures for Service Delivery

The framework for the delivery of these services is as follows:

1. Written notification will be provided to parent(s)/guardian(s) at least annually about the academic, career and personal/social guidance and counseling services which are available to their children. The notification shall include the purpose and general

description of the programs, information regarding ways parent(s)/guardian(s) may review materials to be used in guidance and counseling programs at their child's school and information about the procedure by which parent(s)/guardian(s) may limit their child's participation in such programs.

2. School counselors are prohibited from using counseling techniques which are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology.
3. All information and records of personal/social counseling shall be kept confidential and separate from a student's cumulative educational record and shall not be disclosed to third parties without prior parental (guardian) consent or as otherwise provided by law. See Policy and Regulation 7-1.4 (Student Records).
4. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may elect in writing to have their child not participate in classroom guidance lessons, or any counseling activity to which they object.
5. Parental (guardian) permission is required in writing for any small group counseling or on-going, structured individual counseling in the personal/social domain following initial contacts.
6. Parental (guardian) permission is not required for short duration personal/social counseling which is needed to maintain order, discipline or a productive learning environment.
7. School officials may permit on-going, structured personal/social counseling for children whom they believe would benefit from such counseling, but whose parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to respond either affirmatively or negatively to reasonable requests for consent. Refusal of services must be in writing to the principal.
8. Each school counselor shall spend at least 80 percent of his/her staff time during normal school hours in the direct counseling of individual students or groups of students and may spend up to 20 percent of his staff time during normal school hours on program planning and school support.

For the purposes of this subdivision:

"Appraisal and advisement" means the act of assisting students in exploring their abilities, interests, skills, and achievement to make decisions and develop immediate and long-range goals and plans.

"Consultation, collaboration, and referrals" means the act of (i) providing information to and receiving information from individuals or teams to support a student's needs; (ii) working and communicating with parents, teachers, administrators, other school staff, and community stakeholders to (a) promote achievement for a specific student or (b) promote systemic change to address the needs of groups of underserved or underrepresented groups of students; and (iii) referring students to outside providers and resources as necessary.

"Crisis counseling" means the act of providing counseling to individual students or small groups of students to help such students navigate critical situations such as emergencies and crises.

"Direct counseling" means school counseling curriculum lessons and activities, individual counseling, small group counseling, crisis counseling, appraisal and advisement, and consultation, collaboration, and referrals. "Direct counseling" does not include program planning and school support.

"Individual counseling" means the act of providing developmentally appropriate, goal-focused, and brief counseling sessions to individual students to address issues relating to mental health and wellness, social and emotional development, academic achievement, and college and career readiness.

"Program planning and school support" means the act of defining, planning, managing, and assessing school counseling activities. "Program planning and school support" includes the act of reviewing data, creating annual student outcome goals, creating action plans and results reports, holding annual administrative conferences, monitoring use-of-time, creating annual and weekly calendars, and facilitating school counseling advisory councils.

"School counseling curriculum lessons and activities" means the act of providing data-informed lessons or activities at the classroom level or on a schoolwide basis to provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills appropriate for their developmental levels.

"Small group counseling" means the act of providing counseling to small groups of students with similar developmental or situational challenges with the goal of improving achievement, attendance, mental health or wellness, or behavioral outcomes.

Psychological Services

The services of the school psychologists are available to students who have been identified as in need of these services.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-23.3, 22.1-209, 22.1-209.1, 22.1-291.1; Virginia Board of Education Regulations Regarding School Guidance and Counseling Programs in the Public Schools of Virginia, 8 VAC 20-620-10.

Adopted: November 2002

Revised: August 2006, August 2019, September 2021, August 2023

POLICY 6-5.2 SCHOOL LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTERS

The primary function of Poquoson City Public School libraries/media centers is to implement, enrich and support the educational program of the schools. The centers provide a wide range of materials at various levels of sophistication with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.

To this end the Poquoson City School Board declares that the primary responsibilities of the libraries/media centers are:

1. to provide materials that will stimulate the acquisition of factual knowledge and the development of literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards;
2. to provide a source of information which, when consulted, may enable pupils to make informed judgments;
3. to provide materials containing a wide range of views on issues so that students may develop the practice of critical reading and thinking;
4. to provide materials representative of religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contribution to the American heritage; and
5. to place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the libraries/media centers.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-70, 22.1-78; Virginia Board of Education Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Schools, 8 VAC 20-131-190.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.3 COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Instructional and other staff of the Poquoson City Public Schools shall honor the requirements of the Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. §§101, et seq. The division superintendent or his designee shall, from time to time, distribute information including, where appropriate, guidelines to assist school staff in resolving issues related to copyright law, particularly the fair use and educational use exceptions.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22-1.70, 22.1-78; 17 U.S.C. §§101, et seq.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.4 HOMEWORK

Generally

The Poquoson City School Board supports the assignment of homework to pupils when its use has the purpose of enriching and extending school experiences. Teachers are responsible for thoroughly explaining homework assignments before pupils are to be expected to perform the assigned task(s). Teachers are also responsible for evaluating homework assignments. Within this framework, careful consideration shall be given to the amount and timing of homework. In addition, quality assignments shall be the primary goal. The division superintendent or his/her designee may develop guidelines for the use of homework.

Parental Assistance with Instruction

The School Board encourages parents to provide instructional assistance to their children in the home. The school division offers a voluntary training program to parents of children in kindergarten through third grade, to assist them in developing the skills necessary to provide effective instructional assistance to their children. Information regarding parent training on instructional assistance shall be available in the Poquoson Primary and Poquoson Elementary Schools.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:7; Virginia Board of Education Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, 8 VAC 20-131-10, et seq.

Adopted: November 2002

Revised: July 2004

POLICY 6-5.5 TEXTBOOKS

Adoption

All basal textbooks used in the Poquoson City Public Schools shall be adopted by the Poquoson City School Board in accordance with applicable Virginia law and regulations established by the Virginia Board of Education. All supplemental textbooks shall be approved by the division superintendent or his designee prior to use in the classroom.

The Virginia Department of Education adopts a multiple list of basal texts for a six-year period. At the end of a two-year period additional materials may be evaluated and added to the existing multiple basal list. Upon receiving the State's multiple list, the School Board shall establish a plan for its selections from the list. Textbook adoptions are staggered so that all texts will not be adopted in one year. Textbooks for elective courses not included in the state adoption cycle may be adopted in interim years by the school division.

Textbooks for Students

Free textbooks shall be provided for students in Poquoson City Public Schools. All books shall be returned by each student who has been in attendance in the school division or payment shall be made for books missing or damaged.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-238 through 22.1-243; Virginia Board of Education Regulations Governing Instructional Materials – Selection and Utilization by Local School Board, 8 VAC 20-170-10; and Regulations Governing Textbook Adoption Local Level, 8 VAC 20-230-10; and Regulations Governing Textbooks – Free or Rental Systems State Aid, 8 VAC 20-190-10.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.6 INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Poquoson City School Board shall review and approve guidelines and procedures for the selection, evaluation, approval, and use of instructional materials consistent with applicable Virginia law and regulations established by the Virginia Board of Education. The division superintendent or his designee shall periodically review guidelines and procedures and bring recommendations for changes to the School Board.

The procedures for selection and evaluation of instructional materials shall involve an evaluation committee which should include professional staff, citizens, and when appropriate, students, and should include a procedure for citizens to request reconsideration of instructional materials. These procedures shall offer a thorough and efficient approach which ensures that appropriate instructional materials are selected, and provide an opportunity for the professional staff and community to participate in and be informed of the selection and use of instructional materials.

See Superintendent's Regulation 6-5.6 A, B, and C.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-238 through 22.1-253; Virginia Board of Education Regulations Governing Instructional Materials – Selection and Utilization By Local School Boards, 8 VAC 20-170-10; and Regulations Governing Textbook Adoption-Local Level, 8 VAC 20-230-10.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.7 COMPLAINTS REGARDING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Complaints

The selection of learning resources is governed by Poquoson School Board Policies 6-5.5 and 6-5.6. Despite the care taken in selecting suitable learning resources, and despite the qualifications and expertise of persons involved in that selection process, the School Board recognizes that occasional objections to materials will be made by the public. It is, therefore, the policy of the School Board to provide channels of communication and a fair procedure for citizens to follow in expressing and resolving concerns about learning resources, including instructional materials, used in teaching the curriculum.

Complaints about learning resources shall be presented in writing. The standards and procedure for review shall be consistently applied in recognition of the respective rights and responsibilities of all concerned. Materials shall be considered for their educational suitability and shall not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Challenged Materials

Occasional objections to some materials may be voiced by the public despite the care taken in the selection process and despite the qualifications of persons selecting the materials.

If a complaint is made regarding learning resources to any Poquoson City Public Schools staff member, the procedures are as follows:

1. Listen to the complainant, explain selection procedures, be courteous, and make no commitments.
2. If a complainant's concerns cannot be assuaged, refer complainant to the principal who will provide him/her with the "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form."
3. Upon receipt of the completed "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form, the principal will inform the assistant superintendent for instruction of the complaint and will then appoint a committee composed of the principal, a school library media specialist, a faculty representative, two parent representatives, and others as appropriate.
4. Challenged materials will not be removed from the school, pending final decision; however, access to the materials may be denied to the child/children of the complainant, if the complainant submits a written request.
5. The Review Committee will:
 - a. read, view or listen to the challenged materials in their entirety, while considering the school division's criteria for selecting books and media;
 - b. consider published reviews and standard aids;
 - c. talk with persons who may be knowledgeable about the material in question and similar material;

- d. base opinions on the materials as a whole, and not on passages taken out of context; and
 - e. meet to discuss the challenged materials and prepare a written summary of the recommendations on the disposition of the matter.
6. The principal will notify the complainant in writing of the committee's decision within 30 calendar days of receiving the "Request For Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form" and will forward copies of such notification and the committee's summary to the division superintendent or his designee. The committee's summary will be filed with the principal and the division superintendent or his designee.
7. The complainant may appeal the decision of the Review Committee by submitting a written request for re-evaluation to the division superintendent or his designee within 15 calendar days of receiving notification of the committee's decision.
8. The division superintendent or his designee will appoint a division review committee composed of a library media specialist, two parents, two building administrators, a teacher, and the division superintendent or his designee.
9. The division superintendent or his designee will appoint a division review committee composed of a library media specialist, two parents, two building administrators, a teacher, and the division superintendent or his designee.
10. The Division Review Committee will:
 - a. Read, view or listen to the challenged materials in accordance with the school division's policy and procedures for the selection and evaluation of instructional and resource materials.
 - b. Consider available published reviews and other standard selection aids.
 - c. Talk with persons who may be knowledgeable about the material in question and similar material.
 - d. Base opinions on the materials as a whole, and not on passages taken out of context.
 - e. Meet to discuss the challenged materials and prepare a written report of the recommendations on the disposition of the matter within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.
11. The complainant may appeal in writing, within 15 calendar days following receipt of the Division Review Committee's decision, to the Poquoson City School Board through the office of the division superintendent. The division superintendent will submit the appeal to the Poquoson School Board within 30 calendar days for final determination of the issue. The School Board may seek assistance from outside organizations such as the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, the American Library Association, The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Association of School Librarians, etc., in making its determination.
12. The complainant will be notified of the School Board's decision within 30 school days of the appeal to the division superintendent. The School Board's decision shall be final.

See Superintendent's Regulation 6-5.7.

LEGAL REFERENCES: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-253.13:7(C)(2); 8 VAC 20-170-10.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.8 FIELD TRIPS

The Poquoson City School Board supports the use of field trips to extend the learning opportunities provided in the regular instructional program and to provide opportunities for competition for students in extracurricular programs. Trips shall be approved by the division superintendent or his designee. Principals are expected to consider the educational value of the trip, the availability of the learning opportunities and the distance, time and expense involved in the trip. Principals are also responsible for following all procedures for requesting approval of field trips. Only properly insured modes of transportation are to be used for school trips. Principals should insure that no student is denied participation on a field trip because of the expense of the trip.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-176.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.9 EMPLOYMENT AND WORK-TRAINING CERTIFICATES

Employment certificates for qualified Poquoson City Public School students shall be issued only by the division superintendent or his designee in accordance with all applicable law. The division superintendent or his designee shall have the authority to administer the oath provided for granting such permits and to make any examination necessary for the issuance thereof. No fee shall be charged for issuing any such certificate, nor for administering any oath or rendering any services in respect thereto.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§40.1-78, et seq.

Adopted: November 2002

POLICY 6-5.10 INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS WITH SEXUALLY EXPLICIT CONTENT

Purpose

To establish clear procedures for schools to:

- i identify all instructional materials with sexually explicit content,
- ii ensure parental notification of any instructional materials with sexually explicit content,
- iii permit parents to review all instructional materials with sexually explicit content, and
- iv ensure alternative instructional materials, that do not include sexually explicit content, are provided in a non-punitive manner for any student whose parent so requests.

Definitions

- A. The Code of Virginia Section 2.2-2827 states that “Sexually explicit content” “means
 - (i) any description of or
 - (ii) any picture, photograph, drawing, motion picture film, digital image or similar visual representation depicting sexual bestiality, a lewd exhibition of nudity, as nudity is defined in Section 18.2-390, sexual excitement, sexual conduct or sadomasochistic abuse, as also defined in Section 18.2-390, coprophilia, urophilia, or fetishism.”
- B. The Code of Virginia Section 22.1-1 defines “parent” or “parents” as “any parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person having control or charge of a child.”
- C. For the purposes of this policy, the phrases “instructional material” and “instructional materials” mean any content used by one or more students for an educational purpose, regardless of (a) its format, whether printed, representational, audiovisual, electronic, or digital (such as materials, social media content, and software applications accessible through the internet), or (b) the time, place and manner in which the content is used. Library materials are considered instructional materials when used
 - (i) for completion of an assignment, or
 - (ii) as part of an academic or extracurricular educational program. This includes any division, school, and/or classroom purchased or created assessments.

However, the phrases “instructional material” and “instructional materials” do not include standardized national or state assessments, such ACT, SAT, NAEP, and AP or SOL exams.

Identification of Instructional Materials with Sexually Explicit Content

A. Leadership at each school, with the approval of the division superintendent, shall establish a process for identifying instructional materials with sexually explicit content.

B. Prior to the start of the academic year, schools shall identify the specific instructional materials that include sexually explicit content which may be used during upcoming school year. When determining whether instructional materials contain sexually explicit content, teachers, principals, and division staff should consider student age and maturity, and whether a parent might reasonably consider the instructional content harmful to their child. 15

Notice to Parents

A. At least thirty (30) days prior to the use of any instructional materials with sexually explicit content, principals shall provide written notice to parents that

- (i) specifically identifies the instructional materials with sexually explicit content,
- (ii) informs parents of their right to review such instructional materials, and
- (iii) informs parents of their right to have their child use, in a non-punitive manner, alternative, instructional materials that do not include sexually explicit content.

B. Such notice should be provided in writing to parents by U.S. mail, and/or e-mail.

Parental Right to Review of Instructional Materials with Sexually Explicit Content and Right to Alternative Instructional Materials

A. Principals shall maintain a current list of instructional materials with sexually explicit content by grade and subject on the school's public website.

B. Principals shall provide online access for parental review of instructional materials that include sexually explicit content, unless not technically feasible or prohibited by copyright protection. Schools shall also have available at the school for parent review all instructional materials that include sexually explicit content.

C. Schools shall defer to parents to determine whether the use of sexually explicit content in instructional materials, if any, is appropriate for their child.

D. Upon a parent's request, schools shall provide, in a manner that is not punitive, alternative instructional materials for the student that do not include sexually explicit content.

E. Parents may change their decision with respect to the use of alternative instructional materials by providing notice to the school.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Code of Virginia §22.1-16.8, §22.1-238; and Regulations Governing Textbook Adoption, 8 VAC 20-720-179

Adopted: February 2023