



Book	AUFSD Policies
Section	Section 8000: Instruction
Title	Objection to Instructional and Library Materials and Controversial Issues
Code	8330
Status	Active
Adopted	July 3, 2012
Last Revised	November 26, 2024

**SUBJECT: OBJECTION TO INSTRUCTIONAL AND LIBRARY MATERIALS AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

The Board recognizes the right of District community members to voice concerns and objections about instructional materials and the discussion of controversial issues. This policy addresses how those concerns and objections can be raised.

**Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- a. "Controversial issues" means questions, subjects, or problems which can generate or elicit differences of opinion. These can include issues which may have political, social, environmental, or personal impacts on students and/or the wider community: locally, nationally, or internationally.
- b. "Instructional material" means any print or non-print material with instructional content or an instructional function that is used to facilitate formal or informal learning in the classroom, library media center, or elsewhere in the District. Examples of instructional materials include, but are not limited to: textbooks; workbooks; hardcover and paperback books; e-books; online databases; DVDs; streaming videos; sound recordings; magazines; newspapers; pamphlets; pictures; charts; games; kits; maps; models; slides; and specimens.
- c. "Library material" means any print or non-print material which is cataloged and processed as part of the library media center for use by students and staff. Examples of library materials include, but are not limited to: hardcover and paperback books; e-books; online databases; DVDs; streaming videos; sound recordings; magazines; newspapers; pamphlets; pictures; charts; games; kits; maps; models; slides; and specimens.
- d. "Textbook" means a text, or a text-alternative, that a student is required to use in a particular class or program of the District. Textbooks include:
  - 1. Books, or book substitutes, including hardcover or paperback books, workbooks, or manuals; and
  - 2. Courseware or other content-based instructional materials in an electronic format.

**Objections to Instructional Materials**

The Board has authority to prescribe curriculum in the District and to designate the textbooks to be used in the District. The parent of a student may not compel the District to use, forgo, or discontinue using a particular textbook. Further, the parent of a student may not compel the District to assign an alternate curriculum to a student based upon the parent's disapproval of particular classroom assignments. Students may be able to be excused from instruction in very limited circumstances outlined in law and regulation.

District community members who have questions or concerns about instructional materials should bring these questions and concerns to instructional staff and/or the school library media specialist(s) in the first instance.

District community members who wish to formally object to instructional materials shall submit their objections in writing to the Superintendent. The written objection shall: (a) identify the particular instructional materials that are being challenged; (b) describe the basis upon which the objecting community member believes the challenged materials do not comply with New York State learning standards or any applicable District policy; and (c) indicate the corrective action being sought. District staff who object to instructional materials shall follow the same process as all District community members. Challenged instructional materials will remain in use and/or circulation until a final decision has been made in accordance with this policy. The Superintendent will promptly inform the Board of any such objection that the Superintendent receives.

Upon receipt of an objection, the Superintendent will designate a review committee to investigate and evaluate the challenged instructional materials. The review committee will include, among others, the school library media specialist from the building where the objection originated, the applicable curriculum leader, the building principal, and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The review committee will evaluate the challenged material according to the District's criteria for the evaluation and selection of instructional materials.

The review committee will submit a written report of the results of its review to the Superintendent within 60 days of receipt of the formal written objection. The Superintendent will review the report and make a determination with regard to the objection, and will inform the objecting community member and the Board of the same.

Appeals of decisions by the Superintendent may be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, who will then submit the appeal to the Board for action.

If subsequent objections after an appeal are issued for the same material within a period of five years, the Superintendent may (but is not obligated to) deny the objection based on the prior review and decision.

### **Controversial Issues**

The study and/or discussion of controversial issues may be included as part of the curriculum. Instructional staff will present these issues in their classrooms in an impartial and objective manner. It is expected that library materials in the District will include items that are considered to be controversial.

Instructional staff wishing to call upon outside speakers to present or facilitate discussions or workshops on controversial issues shall work with the building principal who will keep in mind the obligation to present balanced viewpoints. The building principal will inform the Superintendent of the presentation on the controversial issue prior to it occurring.

Any objection to how a controversial issue is being taught, including the use of an outside speaker, should be directed to the building principal who will consult with appropriate instructional staff to address the objection.

If the objection is related to instructional materials being used in the teaching of a controversial issue, the process regarding objection to instructional materials (described above) shall apply. If the objection is related to the curriculum or New York State learning standards, the building principal will address the matter with the individual(s) raising the objection.

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #8320 -- Textbooks, Library Materials, and Other Instructional Materials  
#8360 -- Religious Expression in the Instructional Program

Adopted: 7/3/12

Revised: 9/12/18; 5/4/21; 11/26/24