

Parent FAQ: School Library Materials Approval and Challenge Process

1. What is the School Library Advisory Council (SLAC)?

The Lake Travis ISD SLAC was established by the Board of Trustees to recommend library materials for purchase or donation. The SLAC meets with librarians and staff at least twice each year, reviews proposed materials, and provides recommendations to the Board.

2. How does the book selection process work?

- Librarians and staff create a list of proposed titles.
 - The SLAC reviews the list.
 - The list is posted publicly for at least **30 days** for parents and community members to review and comment.
 - The Board of Trustees votes to approve or reject the list at a public meeting.
-

3. How can parents give input?

During the 30-day public review period, parents can read the proposed list and submit comments through a district-provided form (such as Google Forms) or other designated process. These comments are shared with the Board before their final vote.

4. What happens if a book receives negative comments?

Public feedback is considered by the Board, along with SLAC recommendations. The law does not require a separate process for handling negative comments at this stage; instead, all feedback is part of the Board's decision-making process.

5. Can parents challenge a book that is already in the library?

Yes. Parents, district employees, and residents of the district may file a formal challenge using the state-provided form (coming from TEA). During the challenge process, the book is temporarily removed from circulation until a decision is made.

6. Who makes the final decision on challenges?

The Board of Trustees has the final authority to decide whether a challenged book stays in or is removed from the library. Advisory councils and librarians may provide input, but the Board makes the ultimate decision.

7. Does this affect classroom reading materials?

No. SB 13 applies to **school library collections**, not instructional materials used in classrooms.

8. Do donated books for the library have to go through the same process?

Yes. Donated books follow the same 30-day public posting and Board approval process unless they are exact replacements (same ISBN) of books already in the library.

9. How are “community values” considered?

The Board is responsible for ensuring that approved books meet state library standards and reflect community expectations. SLAC serves in an advisory role to make recommendations that reflect these values.

10. Do library replacement books need to go through the same process?

A replacement book is a copy purchased to replace one that was lost, damaged, or worn out in the school library.

- **No, if it's the same edition (same ISBN):** The book can be added back to the library without public posting or Board approval.

- **Yes, if it's a new edition (different ISBN):** It must be posted for 30 days of public review and approved by the Board before being added to the library.
-

11. If a book is already in the district's catalog, and a librarian wants to purchase a new copy of that book, does it have to go through the same process?

It depends.

SB 13 includes the following narrow exemptions from the 30-day public comment and board approval requirements:

- replace a damaged copy with the same ISBN that is currently in the catalog
- additional copies of a title with the same ISBN that is current in the catalog
- has the same ISBN and has been approved for the same grade levels by the school board from a previously proposed list of library materials

If the book to be purchased meets one of those criteria, then it does not require board approval. If it does not (i.e. ISBNs don't match), then the book will have to be posted for 30-day public comment and approved by the board.

12. Does the definition of "library materials" refer to books only? Or do "library materials" include other items purchased for the library?

In SB 13, library materials are defined as "any book, record, file, or other instrument or document in a school district's library catalog. The term does not include instructional material, as defined by Section 31.002 of the Education Code, or materials procured for the TexShare consortium under Subchapter M, Chapter 441, Government Code.

13. Can school employees who have children enrolled in the district serve as members of the Local School Library Advisory Council if the district has one?

The school board may choose to appoint classroom teachers, librarians and counselors, and school administrators employed by the district to the Local School Library Advisory Council as nonvoting members. Only parents of children enrolled in the district who are not employed by the district, may serve as voting members of the council. The council must consist of at least five members, with a majority of its voting members being nonemployee parents.

14. How will the school board ensure that the entire school community is represented by the members of the Advisory Council?

The law requires each member of the board to appoint an equal number of advisory council members, and the council must have a minimum of five members, the majority of which must be parents of children enrolled in the district. SB 13 does not specify criteria for the school board to ensure comprehensive representation of the entire school community beyond the outlined categories for voting (parents with children in the district) and non-voting members (parents not employed by the district, classroom teachers, librarians, counselors, administrators, business community members, clergy). The decision of who within these categories is appointed rests with the board of trustees.

15. Do districts have to review books currently in the library collection to make sure they comply with new definitions and standards?

No. The law does not require a review of library materials currently in the district's library collection.