

Education Programs

Review and Selection of, and Reconsideration Request Process for, Instructional Text, Materials, Content, or Issues

I. Purpose

This policy provides direction for the review and selection of instructional text, materials, and content. The policy also provides a procedure for addressing a request for a reconsideration of instructional materials, content, or critical issues discussed in classrooms.

II. General Statement of Policy

The school district recognizes that selection of textbooks and instructional materials is a vital support for the district's academic standards and curriculum. The school board has the authority to make final approval on selection of instructional text, materials, and content.

The academic standards and course outlines developed by the staff will serve as the basis for instructional text, materials, and content selection. Professional staff will access libraries, online resources, instructional materials' centers, student support services, community resources, and other appropriate resources that are grounded in research and best practices in an effort to provide effective instruction for all students.

III. Definitions

- A. "Review and Selection Process" means a formal process conducted on a regular schedule where school district curriculum and materials are reviewed, evaluated, selected and proposed based upon district criteria.
- B. "Reconsideration" refers to the designated process for an interested person to request a change in the instructional texts or materials used by the district and how the district will evaluate such a request.

IV. Responsibility of Selection

- A. While state law grants the school board the final approval on the selection of instructional text, materials, and content in the curriculum review adoption cycle, the board recognizes the professional staff's expertise and that staff involvement is vital to the recommendation of instructional text, materials, and content. The director of teaching and learning will work directly with the staff in developing such recommendations.

B. Based on the review of instructional text, materials, and content during the selection process, the recommendations will be grounded in research and best practices, and will:

1. support the academic standards of the education programs;
2. consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
3. foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and varied opinion;
4. meet within the constraints of the school district budget;
5. be in the English language; except that another language may be used when required by state law or for reading materials assigned for a world language course or immersion programming;
6. permit grade-level instruction for students to read and study America's founding documents, including documents that contributed to the foundation or maintenance of America's representative form of limited government, the Bill of Rights, our free-market economic system, and patriotism; and
7. not censor or restrain instruction in American or Minnesota state history or heritage based on religious references in original source documents, writings, speeches, proclamations, or records.

C. The director of teaching and learning will be responsible for developing procedures and guidelines to establish an orderly process for the review and recommendation of textbooks and other instructional materials by the professional staff. Such procedures and guidelines will provide opportunity for input and consideration of the views of students, parents, and members of the school district community. This procedure will be coordinated with the district's curriculum development effort and may utilize the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness committee.

V. Process for Selection of Instructional Text, Materials, and Content

- A. The director of teaching and learning will be responsible for keeping the school board informed of progress on the part of staff and others involved in the review and selection process.
- B. The director of teaching and learning will present recommendations to the board after completion of the review process as outlined in this policy.
- C. Upon board approval, the director of teaching and learning will be responsible for implementing the recommendations into the learning setting.

VI. Process for Reconsideration of Instructional Text and/or Materials

- A. The school board recognizes differences of opinion on the part of some

members of the school district community relating to certain areas of the instruction program. An orderly process for reconsideration of instructional resources and supplemental materials ensures an appropriate balance for those most concerned:

1. The teachers who have the right to express their professional recommendations and opinions on the review and use of instructional resources and materials.
 2. The students who have the right to express their preferences and opinions on the review and use of instructional resources and materials.
 3. The parents and community who have the right to express their preferences and opinions on the review and use of instructional resources and materials.
- B. All instructional materials, including teacher's manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any applicable program will be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of the students.
- C. The procedures and order of the reconsideration of instructional resources and supplemental materials are as follows:

1. Teacher Level Review

Specific instructional material or content objections will be directed to the teacher.

- a. The teacher will treat each request with confidentiality, and work with the student and family to come to a resolution.
- b. The teacher and/or parent/guardian may create an alternative student instruction plan. The school district will not pay for any alternative instruction costs.
- c. The proposed solution will consider inclusion of the student(s) in the classroom while minimizing classroom disruption, and seek to ensure a student is not removed from the classroom setting for an unreasonable amount of time without parental or guardian agreement.
- d. If a resolution cannot be reached, the parties will move to the building level review.

2. Building Level Review

If a resolution cannot be reached between the teacher, student, and parent/guardian, the parent/guardian should contact the principal or designee.

- a. The parties will review the process to date.
- b. The principal or designee will determine whether the alternative student instruction plan is essentially equivalent to that provided as part of the adopted curriculum, and will ensure the proposed solution is viable and provides the best alternative possible for student. The principal or designee may evaluate and assess the quality of the student's alternative student instruction plan for grading purposes.
- c. The proposed solution will consider inclusion of the student(s) in the classroom while minimizing classroom disruption, and seek to ensure a student is not removed from the classroom setting for an unreasonable amount of time without parental or guardian agreement.
- d. If a resolution cannot be reached among these parties, the parties may move to the district level review.

3. District Level Review

If a parent/guardian does not agree with the solution provided by the building level process, they may take their request to the director of teaching and learning by submitting a Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material form found in Appendix I.

- a. Upon receipt of a Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material form, the director of teaching and learning will assemble an ad hoc reconsideration team composed of teachers, administrators, directors, or other staff, as applicable, to review the request, including the proposed solution.
- b. The reconsideration team will use all available information to resolve the submitted request for reconsideration of materials. The team will use the table below as a starting point to determine the degree to which the material meets or does not meet the district's criteria. The questions below will be used not as a pass/fail tool, but as information to guide the decision-making process.

Does the material support the academic standards?
Does the material consider the needs, age, and maturity of students?
Does the material foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and multiple perspectives?

- c. The director of teaching will make a decision informed by the findings of the reconsideration team. The director's decision is final. The resolution will be communicated to those submitting the request and all relevant parties.

VII. Controversial Issues Discussed in Classroom

- A. Controversial issues may be discussed in the classroom to advance student learning, provided that:
1. The issue is related to the course of study or to relevant current events and provides opportunities for critical thinking, for developing tolerance, and for understanding conflicting points of view.
 2. The issue has a meaningful relationship to matters of concern to the students.
 3. Available information about the issue is sufficient to allow alternative points of view to be discussed and evaluated on a factual basis.
 4. All sides of the issue are given a proper hearing, using established facts as primary evidence.
 5. The issue has points of view which can be understood and defined by the students.
 6. The teacher does not use their position to forward their own religious, political, economic, or social bias. The teacher may express a personal opinion if they identify it as such and do not express the opinion for the purpose of persuading students to their point of view.
 7. Discussion or study of the issue is instigated by the students, relevant current events, or the established curriculum, but not by a source outside of the schools.
 8. The discussion does not reflect adversely upon persons because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability, or otherwise violate district policy.
 9. The oral or written presentation does not violate state or federal law.
- B. The superintendent or designee will have the authority to judge whether the above conditions are being met.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, subd. 9 (Compulsory Instruction –Knowledge and Skills)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.20 (Parental Curriculum Review)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.235 (American Heritage Education)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.02 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, subd. 8 (Boards of Independent School Districts - Duties)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.58-124D.64 (Education for English Learners Act)
Minn. Stat. § 127A.10 (State Officials and School Board Members to be Disinterested; Penalty)

20 U.S.C. 1232h(a) (Protection of Pupil Rights)
Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260, 108 S.Ct. 562, 98 L.Ed.2d 592 (1988)
Pratt v. Independent Sch. Dist. No. 831, 670 F.2d 771 (8th Cir. 1982)

Cross References:

Policy 603 (Curriculum and Program Review and Development)

Policy 604 (Grade Level Configuration at District Sites)

Policy 904 (Distribution or Display of Materials on School District Property)

Policy

adopted: 07/20/09

revised: 10/14/19

revised: 04/11/22

revised: 03/09/26

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 273

Edina, Minnesota

Appendix I to Policy 606

Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material

*Please complete the following form or attach a document with the requested information.
Please turn in the completed document to the director of teaching and learning in the district office.*

Course _____

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____ City _____

Complainant represents: Self _____ Organization _____ Group _____

1. What is your concern or objection to the material? (Please be specific; cite pages) _____

2. What do you see as the potential solution to this concern? _____

3. Comments: _____

Date

Signature of Complainant

(03/26)