Community Relations/Instruction

Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

Statement of Policy:

The Region 14 Board of Education understands that, on occasion, a member of the public will wish to lodge a complaint against instructional material used in the classroom or available in the school library/media center. Consideration of requests to reconsider and remove material, displays, or student programs is limited to individuals with a vested interest. An individual with vested interest may challenge any library and other educational materials, display or student program by initiating a review of such material via the submission of a request for reconsideration form.

It shall be the policy of the Region 14 Board of Education that the removal, exclusion or censoring of any book shall not occur on the sole basis that a person with a vested interest finds such book offensive. No library and other educational material, display, or program shall be removed from library media centers, or programs be canceled, because of the origin, background, or viewpoints expressed in such material, display, or program, or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display, or program. Library and other educational materials, displays, and student programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policy.

Until a final decision is made by the review committee, any library and other educational material being challenged shall remain available in the school library media center according to such material's catalog record and be available for a student to reserve, check out, or access.

A school district may consolidate any requests for review and reconsideration of the same challenged library and other educational material. Once a decision has been made by **the review committee** on any library and other educational material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for review and reconsideration for a period of three years.

The Region 14 Board of Education will review and update this policy as necessary every five years.

Definitions

"Library and other educational material" means any material belonging to, on loan to or otherwise in the custody of a school library media center, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and digital material, software and other material not required as part of classroom instruction.

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Definitions (continued)

"School library staff member" means a school library media specialist, school librarian, any certified or non-certificated staff member whose assignment is in the school library or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media specialist or school librarian.

"Individual with a vested interest" means any school staff member employed by a local or regional board of education, parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in a school at the time a reconsideration form is filed, or any student currently enrolled in a school at the time a reconsideration form is filed.

"Remove" means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. **"Remove"** does not include the process of clearing such collection of any materials that are no longer useful.

Material Review and Reconsideration Procedure

The Board of Education has established the following procedure for addressing complaints regarding the utilization of library and other educational materials:

1. Individuals with a vested interest may initiate the review or reconsideration of any library and other educational materials, display, or student program by submitting a request for recommendation form to the principal of the school in which the library and other education materials are being challenged.
2. The Principal, or the Principal's designee, shall promptly forward the request for reconsideration to the Superintendent of Schools for the school district.
3. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, shall appoint a review committee consisting of:
    a. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee;
    b. the Principal of the school in which the library and other educational material is being challenged, or the Principal's designee;
    c. the Director of curriculum, or a person in an equivalent position;
    d. a representative from the local or regional board of education;
    e. at least one grade-level-appropriate teacher familiar with the library material provided, the teacher selected is not the individual who submitted the form;
    f. a parent or guardian of a student *age thirteen years or younger* enrolled in the school district, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the form;
    g. a parent or guardian of a student *aged fourteen years or older* enrolled in the school district, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the form;
    h. a certified school librarian employed by such board or employed by another board of education in the state.

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Material Review and Reconsideration Procedure (continued)

In cases where such form is submitted by a student enrolled in *grades nine to twelve*, inclusive, and when appropriate and at the discretion of the superintendent, a student enrolled in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, may serve on the review committee if such student did not submit the reconsideration form, provided the superintendent consults with the principal of the school involved in such reconsideration request prior to making this determination whether to include such student on the review committee.

4. The **review committee** shall evaluate the request for reconsideration form by reading the challenged material in its entirety and evaluating the challenged material against the school district's *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*.

5. The **review committee** shall make a *written decision* on whether to remove the challenged material *within sixty school days* from the date of receiving such request and provide a copy of the committee's decision and report to *the individual with a vested interest who submitted the form and to the principal of the school*.

6. The individual with a vested interest who submitted the *request for reconsideration form* may appeal to the *review committee's decision* to the local or regional board of education for the school district. The Board shall determine whether the reconsideration process was followed and publish the decision on the school district's website.

General Provisions

Any school library media specialist or school library staff member who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

1312.3
6161.12
Form 1

Regional School District No. 14

Request for Reconsideration of Library Books/Materials

Title _____

Author _____ Publisher _____

This request was initiated by

☐ Parent/Guardian

☐ Student

☐ Other (please specify) _____

The material is best described as a:

☐ Book

☐ Video or Online Content

☐ Periodical/Magazine

☐ Other Media. Please specify _____

Please answer the following questions:

1. Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work? If not, what parts did you examine?

_____
_____
_____

2. In what specific ways do you think this work is inappropriate for students?

_____
_____
_____

3. What have you been told about the educational purpose of this material?

_____
_____
_____

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

5. For what age group would you recommend this material?

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this work by literary critics and/or professional educators/organizations?

7. What are the valuable aspects of this material?

8. What do you feel may be the results of students reading, listening to, or viewing this material?

9. What work/material of equal or superior value would you recommend replacing the one in question?

10. Please explain your reasons for your objection:

Signature of Complainant

Date

1312.3
6161.12
Form 2

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 14
WOODBURY, CONNECTICUT

Request for Appeal of Reconsideration of Library and Other Educational Materials Decision

Full Legal Name: _____ Title of Material:_____

Address: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Author:_____ Publisher: _____

Date the Reconsideration Decision was communicated to you: _____

Please explain why you are appealing against this decision:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How do you believe the review committee failed to follow the reconsideration process?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Are you submitting any documentation with this appeal? If so, please list/describe supporting documents:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

1312.3
6161.12
Complainant
Letter

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 14
WOODBURY, CONNECTICUT

Sample Letter to Complainant

Date: _____

Complainant Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2

Dear [Complainant's Name],

Thank you for bringing your concerns regarding one of our school's library materials to our attention. In accordance with Connecticut state law, our school has a procedure in place to adjudicate concerns and reconsideration requests.

To facilitate this review, we kindly request that you submit a *Request for Reconsideration* of *Library Books and Materials* form to clearly identify the specific content you find objectionable and describe the nature of your concerns. Once your submission is received, it will be forwarded to the District Library Review Committee for formal consideration. The Committee's review process includes thoroughly reviewing the material, assessing its educational value, and addressing all concerns raised.

If you have any questions or require assistance with this process, please do not hesitate to contact me at [phone number or email address].

Thank you for engaging with us to support a thoughtful and responsible approach to creating libraries that meet the needs of all students.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your "Vested Interest" Identity]