0167 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall set aside a portion of every Board meeting, the length of the portion to be determined by the Board, for public comment on any school or school district issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern to the residents of the school district.

Public participation in Board of Education shall occur during the Public Comment section of the agenda and shall be governed by the following rules:

1. A participant must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface comments by an announcement of his/her name, municipality of residence, and group affiliation, if applicable;

2. In order to provide sufficient opportunity for the public to be heard, a time limit of three minutes for each participant may be observed and no participant may cede their three minutes to another participant. Every effort will be made to allow all members of the public an opportunity to speak, not to exceed ~~3~~three minutes per person. For the first public comment section, related to action items only, the Board President may impose a time limit of 60 minutes.This may be adjusted as the Board President sees fit.

3. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic until all others who wish to speak on that topic have been heard;

4. All statements, questions, or inquiries shall be directed to the presiding officer and any questions or inquiries directed by a participant to another Board member shall be redirected to the presiding officer who shall determine if such statement, question, or inquiry shall be addressed by the presiding officer on behalf of the Board or by the individual Board member;

5. If the Board of Education is webcasting the public meeting, the "chat" feature will be on during the public comment sessions only. Web participants will type their name and place of residence ~~the information in~~ as a preface to their comments. Webcast participants making comments via chat will be limited to three minutes of text comment. ~~may only enter one 256 character comment, excluding the announcement of his/her name and place of residence, unless the presiding officer asks for clarification or further information.~~ The President may, at his/her discretion, limit discussion on any topic.

6. The presiding officer may:

a. Interrupt, warn, and/or terminate a participant's statement, question, or inquiry when it is too lengthy;

b. Interrupt and/or warn a participant when the statement, question, or inquiry is abusive, obscene, or may be defamatory;

c. Request any person to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;

d. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person prevents or disrupts a meeting with an act that obstructs or interferes with a meeting;

e. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting; and

f. Waive these rules when necessary for the protection of privacy or to maintain an orderly operation of the Board meeting.

Public Participation in Board of Education meetings may also occur prior to the meeting. A member of the public may submit public comments, limited to 750 ~~250~~ words or three minutes, to the Board through electronic mail or by written letter to the Board Secretary via Boardmembers@readington.k12.nj.us ~~Jason Bohm at jbohm@readington.k12.nj.us~~ or Box 807, 52 Readington Road, Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889. All comments must be received by 12:00 P.M. on the day of the Board meeting. The individual must indicate that the comments are to be read aloud during the public comment section of the agenda.

N.J.S.A. 2C:33-8

N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

Adopted: 22 March 2005
Revised: 24 July 2012
Revised: 8 December 2015
Revised: 13 May 2025
Revised: 10 November 2026

POLICY

READINGTON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Bylaws
0167/Page 1 of 1
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

2535 Library Materials

The Board of Education believes the freedom to read is a human right, constitutionally protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, and individuals have the right to free inquiry and the right to form their own opinions. The freedom to read does not require an individual to agree with topics or themes within a material, but instead allows a reader to explore and engage with differing perspectives to form and inform their own views pursuant to the "Freedom to Read Act" N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-1 through N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-7.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4, the purpose of Regulation 2535 and this Policy is to: provide standards for the curation of library material, establish criteria for the removal of existing school library material or library material selected for inclusion in the school library, and provide protection against attempts to censor library material.

A. Definitions – N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-3

1. For the purpose of Regulation 2535 and this Policy:

   a. "Board of Education" means a Board of Education as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2, the Board of Directors of an educational services commission, a Board of Trustees of a charter school, a Board of Trustees of a renaissance school project, or any other local education agency.

   b. "Censorship" means to block, suppress, or remove library material based on disagreement with a viewpoint, idea, or concept or solely because an individual finds certain content offensive, but does not include limiting or restricting access to any library material deemed developmentally inappropriate for certain students.

   c. "Diverse and inclusive material" means any material that reflects any protected class as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.; material produced by an author who is a member of a protected class as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.; and material that contains the author's points of view concerning contemporary problems and issues, whether international,

national, or local; but excludes content that is inappropriate for grades served by the school library.

d. "Individual with a vested interest" means any teaching staff member employed by the Board of Education, any parent of a student enrolled in the school district at the time the removal form required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5 is filed, and any student enrolled in the district at the time the removal form required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5 is filed.

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

f. "School library staff member" means a school library media specialist, school librarian, any certificated or non-certificated staff member assigned to duties in a school library, or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media specialist or school librarian.

B. Library Material Curation – N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4

1. The Board of Education shall have control over the content of this Policy, except this Policy shall at a minimum:

a. Recognize that library material should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all students and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole;

b. Acknowledge that library material shall not be removed from a school library because of the origin, background, or views of the library material or those contributing to its creation;

c. Recognize the importance of school libraries as centers for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas;

d. Promote the free expression and free access to ideas by students by prohibiting the censorship of library material;

e. Acknowledge that a school library media specialist is professionally trained to curate and develop the school library collection that provides students with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate library material available to schools; and

f. Establish a procedure for a school library staff member to review library material within a school library on an ongoing basis, which shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) The library material's relevance;

(2) The condition of the library material;

(3) The availability of duplicates;

(4) The availability of more recent developmentally appropriate library material; and

(5) The continued demand for the library material.

2. The Board of Education, in consultation with school library staff members, shall have discretion in selecting, purchasing, or acquiring library material for inclusion in the school library. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4 or this Policy shall be construed to require the Board of Education to purchase, or otherwise acquire, library material for a school library. ~~To that end, the Board of Education will provide the school library staff member with the tools and professional development to ensure materials are developmentally appropriate for the PreK-8 students served. Materials with significant educational value that may also touch upon sensitive topics must prioritize the educational, literary,~~

~~artistic, and scientific merit over any adverse content. All materials selected shall be consistent with student interests, the district curriculum and be developmentally appropriate for the grade levels served. This language is intended to guide future selections. Removal of any material is guided by regulation 2535.~~
To that end, the Board of Education will provide the school library staff member with the tools and professional development to ensure materials are developmentally appropriate for the PreK-8 students served. Materials with significant educational value that may also be rated for grades above the grade levels of the school served must prioritize the educational, literary, artistic, and scientific merit. All materials selected shall be consistent with student interests, the district curriculum and be developmentally appropriate for the reading levels, interest levels, and/or grade levels served. This language is intended to guide future selections. Removal of any material is guided by regulation 2535.

3. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4 and this Policy shall be construed to restrict the Board of Education's authority to select textbooks and school supplies related to the curriculum.

C. Library Material Recommendation and Selection Process

1. The school library staff member in each school building will accept the written requests of teaching staff members for new and revised library material. Each request should include:

   a. The name and originator of the library material;

   b. The publisher or distributor;

   c. A brief description of the library material; and

   d. The reason for the request, including the relevance of the library material to the instructional program.

2. The school library staff member shall review each recommendation against the standards for selection in B.1.f. above and the amount budgeted for library material in the current or succeeding school year, as appropriate.

3. The school library staff member shall present to the Superintendent or designee a list of recommended purchases of library material. The list will include multiple copies of library material when a high level of interest and need is anticipated.

4. Standards to be applied in the selection of library material shall relate to, support, and enrich the courses of study adopted by the Board of Education.

D. Censorship of School Library Material Prohibited, Right to Reserve, Check Out – N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-6

1. The Board of Education shall not remove library material from a school library in the district because of the origin, background, or views of the library material or those contributing to its creation, and shall not engage in censorship of library material.

2. The Board of Education shall allow a student to reserve or check out any developmentally appropriate library material, including diverse and inclusive material, regardless of the origin, background, or views of the library material or those contributing to its creation.

E. Removal Request Procedure

Any request by an individual with a vested interest to have library material removed from a school library in the district shall follow the grievance procedure outlined in Regulation 2535 in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5.

F. Immunity, School Library Staff – N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-7

A school library staff member who engages in activities as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4 through 18A:34A-6 and B. through E. above shall be immune from civil and criminal liability arising from good faith actions performed pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4 through 18A:34A-6 and B. through E. above.



POLICY

READINGTON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF EDUCATION

N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-1 through N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-7

Adopted: February 10, 2026

R 2535 Library Materials

Any individual with a vested interest requesting to have library material removed from a school library in the district shall follow the grievance procedure outlined below in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5.

A. Definitions – N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-3

1. For the purpose of Policy 2535 and this Regulation:

   a. "Board of Education" means a Board of Education as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2, the Board of Directors of an educational services commission, a Board of Trustees of a charter school, a Board of Trustees of a renaissance school project, or any other local education agency.

   b. "Censorship" means to block, suppress, or remove library material based on disagreement with a viewpoint, idea, or concept or solely because an individual finds certain content offensive, but does not include limiting or restricting access to any library material deemed developmentally inappropriate for certain students.

   c. "Diverse and inclusive material" means any material that reflects any protected class as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.; material produced by an author who is a member of a protected class as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.; and material that contains the author's points of view concerning contemporary problems and issues, whether international, national, or local; but excludes content that is inappropriate for grades served by the school library.

   d. "Individual with a vested interest" means any teaching staff member employed by the Board of Education, any parent of a student enrolled in the school district at the time the removal form required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5 is filed, and any student enrolled in the district at the time the

removal form required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5 is filed.

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

f. "School library staff member" means a school library media specialist, school librarian, any certificated or non-certificated staff member assigned to duties in a school library, or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media specialist or school librarian.

B. The following procedure shall be adhered to any time an individual with a vested interest submits a complaint requesting removal of library material from any of the district's school libraries.

1. Complaints about library material shall be made on a request for removal form and submitted to the Principal of the school building in which the library material is challenged to initiate a review of the material.

2. The individual with a vested interest shall complete and sign a request for removal form available in the Principal's office. The request for removal form shall include:

a. The title, author, and publisher of the library material at issue;

b. Sections of the library material to which the individual with a vested interest objects; and

c. An explanation of the reasons for the objection.

3. Within five working days of the receipt of the request for removal form, the Principal or designee shall forward the request for removal to the Superintendent.

4. Upon receipt of the request for removal form, the Superintendent or designee shall appoint a review committee consisting of:

   a. The Superintendent or designee;

   b. The Principal or designee of the school in which the library material is challenged;

   c. The school library media specialist or a school library staff member;

   d. A representative selected by the Board of Education;

   e. At least one grade-appropriate teacher familiar with the library material, provided the teacher selected is not the individual who submitted the request for removal form;

   f. A parent of a student enrolled in the school district, provided the parent selected is not the individual who submitted the request for removal form;

   g. If appropriate, and at the discretion of the Superintendent, in cases where a student enrolled in the district in grades nine through twelve filed the request for removal form, a student enrolled in the district in grades nine through twelve may volunteer to serve on the review committee if that student did not file the request for removal form. The Superintendent shall consult with the Principal of the school involved in the removal request in making this determination; and

   h. Any additional members the Superintendent or designee deem necessary.

5. The challenged library material shall remain within the school library and available for a student to reserve, check out, or access

until there is a final decision reached by the Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5.b.(5) and B.7. below.

6. The review committee members shall evaluate the request for removal form and review the challenged library material in its entirety. The review committee shall meet to discuss the library material and concerns raised and make a recommendation on whether the challenged library material should be removed from circulation, retained, or limited in use. The review committee shall submit its written report with recommendations to the Board of Education no later than sixty school days from the date of the next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting after receipt of the request for removal form:

   a. A copy of the review committee's report shall also be provided to the individual with a vested interest who filed the request for removal form and the Principal who received the request for removal form.

7. The Board of Education shall review the review committee's report and make a final determination on whether the library material is to be removed from the school library or limited in use. The Board of Education shall provide a written statement of reasons for:

   a. The removal, limitation, or non-removal of a library material; and

   b. Any final determination that is contrary to the recommendations of the review committee.

8. The written statement of reasons shall be posted on the Board of Education's website in a prominent and easily accessible location within thirty days of the determination.

9. All decisions on whether to remove from circulation, retain, or limit in use library material shall be based on the library material as a whole, not isolated passages.

10. All request for removal forms and outcomes shall be maintained in accordance with other similar records in the district.

11. Library material that has been challenged pursuant N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5.b.(1) through 18A:34A-5.b.(5), Policy 2535, and this Regulation shall not be subject to challenge for at least one year in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5.b.(6).

12. The district may consolidate requests for removal of the same challenged library material in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5.b.(7).

13. The Board of Education's determination issued in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-5, Policy 2535, and this Regulation which denies a request for removal shall not constitute a controversy or dispute pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9. However, an individual with a vested interest, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-3, may file a petition of appeal of the Board of Education's final determination to remove library material to the Commissioner of Education through the Office of Controversies and Disputes in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9 and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.

14. Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-1 through 18A:34A-7, Policy 2535, and this Regulation shall be construed as creating a separate legal cause of action regarding any determination issued pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-1 through 18A:34A-7, Policy 2535, and this Regulation.

15. A school library staff member who engages in activities as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4 through 18A:34A-6 shall be immune from civil and criminal liability arising from good faith actions performed pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4 through 18A:34A-6.

C. The Board recognizes that as children age they will require access to more advanced reading material. As texts become increasingly advanced and complex they may address mature literary themes. When it comes to texts

that are rated for grades 10 and up, additional considerations, consistent with statute N.J.S.A. 18A:34A-4, may be incorporated into the library staff member's analysis in order to determine the appropriateness for a grade PreK to 8 district. These additional considerations shall not censor or restrict the purchase of materials based on disagreements with the content, ideas, or viewpoints expressed in the material.

~~The following procedure shall be implemented regarding selection of library materials that may contain sensitive content:~~

~~If a library staff member identifies the purchase of material that may contain sensitive content, prior to presenting the material to the Superintendent or designee as per section C(3) of policy 2535, the staff member shall present the material to a review panel consisting of the building principal, Supervisor of Humanities, and another librarian ("the Panel"). The Panel's review process may include presentation of the material to the Ed/Tech Committee of the Board of Education for further review.~~

Adopted: February 10, 2026

[See POLICY ALERT No. 238]

8660 TRANSPORTATION BY PRIVATE VEHICLES – TO AND FROM SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES

The Board of Education authorizes the transportation by private vehicle of students of **the** ~~this~~ district between the school and ~~a~~ school-**related activities** ~~activity~~ approved by **the** ~~this~~ Board in accordance with this **P**~~p~~olicy **and N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(a)**.

Any such transportation must be approved in advance and in writing by the Superintendent of designee. The writing must set forth the date, time, and reason for the transportation; the places from and to which students will be transported; the name and address of the driver; the names of the students to be transported; a brief description of the transportation vehicle; and the signature of the driver. The parent(s) ~~or legal guardian(s)~~ of a participating student will be given, on request, the name of the driver and the description of the vehicle.

No person shall be approved as driver for the transportation of students in a private vehicle who is not an employee of **the** ~~this~~ Board or the parent(s) ~~or legal guardian(s)~~ of a student enrolled in **the** ~~this~~ district and the holder of a currently valid license to operate a motor vehicle in the State of New Jersey.

[Optional

No person shall be permitted to transport students who has been convicted of a moving vehicle violation within the period of three calendar years immediately preceding the request for transportation approval.]

The Board may withdraw the authorization of any private vehicle driver **at any time.**

Any private vehicle used for the transportation of students must be owned by the approved driver or the spouse of the approved driver,~~;~~ have the capacity to hold

© Copyright 2026 · Strauss Esmay Associates, LLP · 1886 Hinds Road · Suite 1 · Toms River, NJ 08753-8199 · 732-255-1500

not more than eight persons,; and must conform to registration, inspection, and

insurance requirements of the State of New Jersey for privately owned vehicles. Seat belts shall be worn by the driver and the passengers while the vehicle is in motion. No vehicle may be used to transport more persons than its normal load capacity.

The responsibility of teaching staff members for the discipline and control of students will extend to their transportation of students in a private vehicle.

Drivers who are not teaching staff members are requested to report student misconduct to the Building Principal.

Expenses incurred by drivers of private vehicles **who are employees of the Board** in the course of transporting students **may** ~~will~~ be reimbursed by the Board **upon approval of the Superintendent** ~~at the approved mileage rate and upon presentation of evidence of costs for tolls and parking fees~~.

N.J.S.A. 18A:16-6.; 18A:25-2.; 18A:39-20.1.
N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6; 6A:27-7.7

© Copyright 2026 · Strauss Esmay Associates, LLP · 1886 Hinds Road · Suite 1 · Toms River, NJ 08753-8199 · 732-255-1500

[See POLICY ALERT No. 238]

8662 TRANSPORTATION BY PRIVATE OR DISTRICT-OWNED VEHICLES – TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The Board of Education may designate school personnel who are not licensed as school bus drivers to transport students between home and school in a private or district-owned vehicle with a capacity of eight or fewer passengers, excluding the driver, provided the designated school personnel meet the criteria and requirements at N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(c), N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(d), and this Policy.

For the purpose of this Policy, "school personnel" means any person employed by the school district pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(b)1.

For the purpose of this Policy, "designated individual" means an individual designated by the Board to transport students between home and school in a private or district-owned vehicle.

The Board requires the designated school personnel to meet, at a minimum, the following criteria pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-20.1.:

1. Be at least twenty-one years of age;

2. Possess a valid New Jersey driver's license for a minimum of three years;

3. Have completed, within the past year, a physical examination pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:16-2., a copy of which is on file with the district;

4. Have completed, within the past year, a criminal history background check pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1.;

5. Have completed, within the past year, a Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) check that demonstrates no evidence of abuse;

© Copyright 2026 • Strauss Esmay Associates, LLP • 1886 Hinds Road • Suite 1 • Toms River, NJ 08753-8199 • 732-255-1500

6. Have submitted, to the district, a driver history abstract that demonstrates evidence of no alcohol- or drug-related motor vehicle violations in the past five years;

7. Provide written consent to allow the district to conduct monthly motor vehicle record checks pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:2-3.4.c.; and

8. Have completed the training required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-19.1a.c. and N.J.S.A. 18A:39-19.2.

No later than August 15 of each year, the district shall provide, to the Executive County Superintendent, the following:

1. A list of school personnel who have been designated to provide student transportation between home and school;

2. A copy of each designated individual's driver history abstract documenting that, in the previous five years, the individual has not committed an alcohol- or drug-related motor vehicle violation, or any other motor vehicle violation, that would disqualify the individual from transporting students pursuant to Title 18A or Title 39 of the New Jersey Statutes; and

3. Documentation of automobile liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage in an amount in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1.6(a).

School personnel shall not transport students between home and school pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(b) and this Policy if the school personnel are not included on the list required at N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(d) and this Policy or if the list is not provided to the Executive County Superintendent by the August 15 due date.

A designated individual shall immediately notify the district of any alcohol- or drug-related motor vehicle violation, or any other motor vehicle violation, that would disqualify the individual from transporting students pursuant to Title 18A or Title 39 of the New Jersey Statutes, if the violation occurs in the current school year during which the individual has been designated to transport students between home and school.

© Copyright 2026 • Strauss Esmay Associates, LLP • 1886 Hinds Road • Suite 1 • Toms River, NJ 08753-8199 • 732-255-1500

The district shall access, on a monthly basis, each designated individual's driving record to ensure the individual has not committed a disqualifying offense.

If the district discovers that a designated individual has committed a disqualifying offense, pursuant to Title 18A or Title 39 of the New Jersey Statutes, the district shall immediately notify the Executive County Superintendent of the offense and shall immediately remove the individual from the list of designated drivers.

Any vehicle used to transport students only pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(a), N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(b), or this Policy shall meet all State and Federal standards and requirements specific to the vehicle and in accordance with the transported student's IEP, if applicable.

Any vehicle used to transport students only pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(a), N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6(b) or this Policy shall be exempt from the requirements at N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.1, N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.2(a), N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.4, N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.9, and N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.1.

A designated individual shall be exempt from the requirements at N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.2, N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.3, and N.J.A.C. 6A:27-12.1 except as set forth at N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.6.

N.J.S.A. 18A:39-20.1.
N.J.A.C. 6A:27-7.1; 6A:27-7.2; 6A:27-7.4; 6A:27-7.6; 6A:27-7.9;
6A:27-11.2; 6A:27-11.3; 6A:27-12.1

Adopted:

© Copyright 2026 • Strauss Esmay Associates, LLP • 1886 Hinds Road • Suite 1 • Toms River, NJ 08753-8199 • 732-255-1500