

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
SERIES 600**

602.6

TITLE: CHALLENGE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Any resident of the school district may raise objection to instructional materials used in the district's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection and followed the proper procedure and observed the criteria for selecting such material.

The school official or staff member receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials shall try to resolve the issue informally. The materials shall remain in use unless removed through the procedure subsequently outlined in this policy.

The school official or staff member initially receiving a complaint shall explain to the complainant the School 's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the educational material.

The school official or staff member initially receiving a complaint shall explain to the best of his or her ability the particular place the objected-to material occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the complaining party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the material.

In the event that the person making an objection to material is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person raising the question should be referred to the principal or to the media specialist for that attendance center. If, after private counseling, the complainant desires to file a formal complaint, the person to whom the complainant has been referred will assist in filling out a reconsideration request.

The individual receiving the initial complaint shall advise the principal where the challenged material is being used of the initial contact no later than the end of the following school day, whether or not the complainant has apparently been satisfied by the initial contact. The principal shall maintain a written record of the contact.

The principal shall review the selection and objection rules with the staff at least annually. The staff shall be reminded that the right to object to materials is one granted by policies enacted by the Board of Trustees and firmly entrenched in law. They shall also be reminded of ethical and practical considerations in attempting to handle resident complaints with courtesy and integrity.

Requests for reconsideration shall be governed by these guidelines:

Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge instructional materials used in the district's educational program on the basis of appropriateness. This

procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the schools and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.

Any formal objections to the instructional materials must be made in writing. The reconsideration request shall be signed by the complainant and filed with the superintendent. Within five business days of the filing of the request, the superintendent shall file the material in question with the Reconsideration Committee for re-evaluation. The committee shall recommend disposition to the office of the superintendent.

Generally, access to the challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the material may be removed temporarily by the superintendent.

The Reconsideration Committee shall be made up of ten members:

- One Teacher designated annually by the superintendent.

- The school media specialist.

- Five members from the community appointed by the executive committee of the school system's

 - Parent-Teacher-Student Association.

 - Three high school students, selected from and by the Student Council..

- The chairperson of the committee shall not be an employee or officer of the district. The secretary

 - Shall be an employee or officer of the district.

 - Meetings may be called by the superintendent to consider removal of materials.

 - The committee shall receive all reconsideration requests from the superintendent.

The procedure for the first meeting following receipt of a reconsideration request is as follows:

- Distribute copies of written request.

- Give complainant or a group spokesman an opportunity to talk about and expand on the request form.

- Distribute reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the material when available.

- Distribute copies of challenged material as available.

At a subsequent meeting, interested persons, including the complainant, may have the opportunity to share their views. The committee may request that individuals with special knowledge be present to give information to the committee.

The complainant shall be kept informed by the secretary concerning the status of his or her complaint throughout the committee reconsideration process. The complainant and known interested parties shall be given appropriate notice of such meetings.

At the second or subsequent meeting, as desired, the committee shall make its decision in open session. The committee's final decision will be: (1) to take no removal action, (2) to remove all or part of the challenged material from the total school environment, or (3) to limit the educational use of the challenged material. The sole criterion for the final

decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use. The written decision and its justification shall be forwarded to the superintendent for appropriate action, to the complainant, and to the appropriate attendance centers.

A decision to sustain a challenge shall not be interpreted as a judgement of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection or use of the material.

Requests to reconsider materials, which have previously been before the committee, must receive approval of the majority of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered. The committee shall act upon every reconsideration request.

In the event of a severe overload of challenges, the committee may appoint a sub-committee of members or nonmembers to consolidate challenges and to make recommendations to the full committee. The composition of this subcommittee shall approximate the representation on the full committee.

Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, of challenged material shall be excused from the committee during the deliberation on such materials. The superintendent may appoint a temporary replacement for the excused committee member, but such replacement shall be of the same general qualifications of that person excused.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, he or she may request that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the school board.

Adopted: March 3, 1983