

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REGULATION

A. A member of the school district community may raise an objection to instructional materials used in the school district's education 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. For the purpose of this policy the term "instructional materials" includes printed and audiovisual materials (not equipment), whether considered classroom materials or library materials; the term "text materials" includes textbooks and other print and non-printed material provided in multiple copies for use of a total class or major segment of a class.

A. Initial Contact for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials.

1. The school official or employee receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials will try to resolve the issue informally. The materials generally will remain in use pending the outcome of the reconsideration procedure.
 - a. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the board's selection procedure, criteria to be met by the instructional materials, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material (see policy 603.5).
 - b. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the role of the objected material in the education program, its intended educational purpose, and additional information regarding its use. In the event the instructional material is housed in the school library the employee may refer the individual to the teacher-librarian who can identify and explain the use of the material.
2. The employee receiving the initial complaint will advise the building principal of the initial contact no later than the end of the school day following the discussion with the individual, whether or not the individual has been satisfied by the initial contact. A written record of the contact is maintained by the principal in charge of the attendance center. Each building principal shall inform employees of their obligation to report complaints.
3. In the event the individual making an objection to instructional materials is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the individual is referred to the principal or to the teacher-librarian of the attendance center. If, after consultation with the principal or teacher-librarian, the individual desires to file a formal complaint, the principal or teacher-librarian will assist in filling out a Reconsideration Request Form in full and filing it with the superintendent or designee. If a formal request for reconsideration has not been received by the principal within two weeks of the individual requesting a form, it shall be considered closed.

B. Request for Reconsideration

1. A member of the school district community may formally challenge instructional materials on the basis of appropriateness used in the school district's education program. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the school district and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.
2. Individuals will complete an electronic Reconsideration Form. In the event that this is not possible, each attendance center and the school district's central administrative office will keep on hand and make available a paper copy of Reconsideration Request Forms. Formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
3. The individual will state the specific reason the instructional material is being challenged. The Reconsideration Request Form is submitted by the individual to the principal at the building who then will file a copy with the superintendent or designee.

4. The building principal will convene a reconsideration committee for re-evaluation and keep the superintendent or designee apprised of progress.
5. Generally, access to challenged instructional material will not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the instructional material may be removed temporarily by following the provisions of Section B.6.d. of this rule.
6. The Reconsideration Committee
 - a. The reconsideration committee is made up of five or six members: a district representative, building principal, building teacher librarian, a teacher, a student representative selected by building principal (except at the primary level, thus the committee could have five members, instead of six) and a parent representative from the building's parent group. In absence of this parent group at a building, the principal will seek a parent member of the district's School Improvement Advisory Committee.
 - b. Special meetings may be called by the principal or superintendent to consider temporary removal of materials in unusual circumstances. A recommendation for temporary removal will require a two-thirds vote of the committee.
 - c. The committee will receive the completed Reconsideration Request Form from the principal within two weeks of the submission of the form to the building principal.
 - d. The committee will determine its agenda for the first meeting (and subsequent meetings) which may include the following:
 - (1) Distribution of copies of the completed Reconsideration Request Form.
 - (2) An opportunity for the individual or a group spokesperson to talk about or expand on the Reconsideration Request Form.
 - (3) Distribution of reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the challenged instructional material if available.
 - (4) Distribution of copies of the challenged instructional material as available.
 - (5) Discussion of the guidelines set forth in the Instructions to Reconsideration Committee.
 - (6) Review of the selection process for the challenged instructional material and may, to its satisfaction, determine that the challenge is without merit and dismiss the challenge.
 - e. At the initial meeting or a subsequent meeting, if held, the committee will follow the guidelines in the Instructions to Reconsideration Committee individuals and resolve the request in one of three ways: take no removal action; remove identified material from the total school environment; or agree to a limitation of the educational use of the material. The sole criterion for the final recommendation is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
 - f. The individual filing the request is kept informed by the reconsideration committee on the status of the Reconsideration Request Form throughout the reconsideration process. The individual filing the challenge and known interested parties is given appropriate notice of meetings.
 - g. The written final recommendation and its justification are forwarded to the superintendent, the individual and the appropriate attendance centers. The superintendent may also make an alternate recommendation but if so, it should be independent from the committee's. Following the superintendent's decision with respect to the committee's recommendation, the individual or the chairperson of the reconsideration committee may appeal the decision to the board for review. Such appeal must be presented to the superintendent or designee in writing within five days following the announcement of the decision. The board will promptly determine whether to hear the appeal.
 - h. A recommendation to sustain a request will not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the individuals involved in the original selection or use of the material.
 - i. Requests to reconsider materials which have previously been reconsidered by a committee must receive approval of two-thirds of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered.

- j. If necessary or appropriate in the judgment of the committee, the committee may appoint a subcommittee of members or nonmembers to consolidate requests and to make recommendations to the full committee. The composition of this subcommittee will approximate the representation of the full committee.
- k. Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, or person making the request of the identified material are excused from the committee during the deliberation of the instructional materials. The superintendent or designee may appoint a temporary replacement for the excused committee member, but the replacement must be of the same general qualifications as the member excused.
- l. Persons dissatisfied with the decision of the Board may appeal to the Iowa Board of Education pursuant to state law.

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