

# LEARNING RESOURCES – CHALLENGED MATERIALS

## Background

Any resident or employee of the District may formally challenge learning resources used in the District's educational program on the basis of appropriateness. This Administrative 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.

## Procedures

1. Request for Informal Reconsideration
  - 1.1. The Principal receiving a complaint regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue informally.
    - 1.1.1. The Principal or other appropriate staff shall explain to the questioner the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.
    - 1.1.2. The Principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the education program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the resource.
    - 1.1.3. If the questioner wishes to file a formal challenge, a copy of Administrative Procedure 251 - Selection of Learning Resources and a Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources form shall be provided to the party concerned.
2. Request for Formal Reconsideration
  - 2.1. Each Principal will keep on hand and make available Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources forms. All formal objections to learning resources must be made on these forms.
  - 2.2. The Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources form shall be signed by the questioner and filed with the Principal.
  - 2.3. The Associate Superintendent, School Services shall be informed by the Principal of the formal complaint received.
  - 2.4. The request for reconsideration of materials in school-based collections shall be referred to a reconsideration committee at the school or District level for re-evaluation of the resource.
  - 2.5. The reconsideration committee may choose to consult District support staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge.

2.6. The reconsideration committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in Administrative Procedure 251 - Selection of Learning Resources.

## 2.7. Resolution

2.7.1. The reconsideration committee shall proceed within these principles to:

2.7.1.1. Examine the challenged resource;

2.7.1.2. Consider written submissions by community members in a session that includes an opportunity for committee members to question presenters;

2.7.1.3. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resources;

2.7.1.4. Weigh values and faults and form opinions;

2.7.1.5. Discuss the challenged resource;

2.7.1.6. Discuss the challenged item with the individual questioner when appropriate;

2.7.1.7. Determine a final recommendation in camera;

2.7.1.8. Prepare a written report that will include the procedures followed, the minutes of meetings, and the rationale for the decision made by the committee.

2.7.2. The decision and rationale shall be discussed with the individual questioner and appropriate staff if requested.

2.7.3. For school-based collections, the written report shall be retained by the Principal, with copies forwarded to the Associate Superintendent, School Services.

2.7.3.1 A minority report may also be filed.

2.7.4. The decision of the respective reconsideration committees is binding on the individual school.

2.7.5. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this Administrative Procedure, the questioner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee under Section 11 of the *School Act*.

## 3. Guiding Principles

3.1. Any resident or employee of the District may raise objection to learning resources used in a school's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such resources were duly qualified to make the selection, followed the proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selecting learning resources.

3.2. The Principal is to review the selection and objection rules with the teaching staff at least annually. The staff is to be reminded that the right to object to learning resources is one granted by procedures enacted by the District.

3.3. No parent has the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than his/her own children.

- 3.4. Although it is the learning resources that are challenged, the principles of the freedom to read/listen/view must be defended as well.
- 3.5. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
- 3.6. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
- 3.7. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgement of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

Reference: Sections 7, 8, 11, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act  
Evaluating, Selecting, and Managing Learning Resources: A Guide (2002)

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