

Reconsideration of Materials

It is possible that there may be an objection to a selection, despite the care taken to select valuable materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of the persons who select materials. When an individual raises a question concerning the content of any material, the person and the question should be treated with respect for the rights of the questioning individual and the rights of others who may view the material differently. Thus, a process is in place that is designed to keep the material at the center of discussion. Adhering to these procedures exactly as outlined is tantamount to respecting the rights of all involved. Without exception, the following steps will be taken in handling all complaints:

- a. The complainant is asked to file his/her objections in writing on a copy of the attached form ("Request for Reconsideration of Materials"). This form may be obtained from the Media Center or Media Center Website. One report must be filed per title, and the report must specify exact pages and content, as well as detailed reason(s) why material is found objectionable. Series and/or entire genres will not be reviewed as a whole.
- b. The district Superintendent is informed of the complaint, along with the principal and media specialist affected by the complaint.
- c. All challenged materials will remain in circulation until the complaint is processed and a final decision reached. However, if applicable the student involved will be offered an appropriate alternate selection.
- d. When the completed "Request for Reconsideration of Material" form is returned to the principal, the school media committee shall reevaluate the questioned material in light of accepted selection policies and educational objectives of the school. The committee will:
 1. Read and examine the material in light of its educational purpose as outlined in the district's statement of philosophy for the selection of materials.
 2. Check the general acceptance of the materials by reading reviews and consulting standard selection aids.
 3. Request more information from the complainant(s) if further clarification of the questionnaire is deemed expedient.
 4. Weigh the value and fault against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages pulled out of context.
 5. Discuss the material and prepare a report of the proceedings. It is vital that the focus of the committee's work be the material under reconsideration, and as the goal is to discuss the merits and appropriateness of the work, a consensus for action is not required. The report serves to recommend action, if consensus is reached, or to reflect committee discussions, if unable to be in complete agreement on action. The material will remain on the shelf unless consensus to remove it is reached by the committee.
 6. File a copy of the report in the school administrative offices.
- e. The committee shall submit a copy of the report to the concerned individual.
- f. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, a written appeal shall be submitted prior to and by the end of the 15th working day after the complainant has received the committee's report. The appeal shall be submitted to the system-wide media committee, which shall reevaluate the material and submit its written decision to the individual and the Superintendent.

- g. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may meet with the Superintendent and discuss the matter, and be provided with a written response regarding the Superintendent's decision. The Superintendent will act in any one of the following ways: 1) support the response of the District Media Advisory Committee; 2) request that the District Media Advisory Committee revisit the complaint and modify their response; or 3) overturn the response of the District Media Advisory Committee. The State also requires that minutes of any such hearings be taken and made available should the State request them upon appeal beyond the Superintendent.
- h. If satisfaction is still not received, he/she may present a written appeal to the district Board of Education. The Board of Education will consider the appeal at their next regularly scheduled meeting, and will respond with a written reply. The School Board will act in any one of the following ways: 1) support the response of the Superintendent; 2) request that the Superintendent revisit the complaint and modify his/her response; or 3) overturn the response of the Superintendent. The State also requires that minutes of any such hearings be taken and made available should the State request them upon appeal beyond the Board of Education.
- i. If the complainant is still not satisfied, he/she may present a written appeal to the State Board of Education, requesting a hearing. The decision of the State Board of Education completes the process.