

**4140 Challenging of Learning Resources**

Policy 4140

STATUS: ADOPTED

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*Challenging of Learning Resources*

Board Approved: October 23, 1978

Last Revised: June 19, 2013

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Description:

The Board of Education believes that any learning resources used in the schools may be challenged and that identified procedures will be used to address the challenge.

*Challenging of Learning Resources*

Board Approved and Codified: June 16, 1986

Last Revised: June 19, 2013

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Description:

**I. REQUEST FOR INFORMAL RECONSIDERATION**

The school receiving a complaint regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue informally.

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.
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
3. If the questioner wishes to file a formal challenge, a copy of the district Selection of Learning Resources policy and a Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources (Appendix A) form shall be mailed by the principal to the party concerned.

**II. REQUEST FOR FORMAL RECONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL-BASED RESOURCES****Preliminary Procedures**

1. Each school 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. The Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources form shall be signed by the questioner and filed with the principal if the resource is in a school, or with the District Resource Centre Coordinator if the resource is in a district-based collection.
3. The assistant superintendent and the Resource Centre Librarian shall be informed by the A/O of the formal complaint received.
4. The request for reconsideration of materials in school-based collections shall be referred to a reconsideration committee at the school level for re-evaluation of the resource.

**The School Based Committee**

1. The School Based Committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the district's Selection of Learning Resources policy.

### **Resolution**

1. The School Based Committee shall proceed within these guidelines:
  - i) Examine the challenged resource.
  - ii) Consider written submissions by community members in a session which includes an opportunity for committee members to question presenters.
  - iii) Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resources.
  - iv) Weight values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
  - v) Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program.
  - vi) Discuss the challenged item with the individual questioner when appropriate.
  - vii) Determine a final recommendation in camera.
  - viii) Prepare a written report which will include the procedures followed, the minutes of meetings, and the rationale for the decision made by the committee.
2. The decision and rationale shall be discussed with the individual questioner and appropriate staff if requested.
3. The written report shall be retained by the school principal, with copies forwarded to the Resource Centre Coordinator and district staff.
4. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by trustees and appropriate officials only.
5. The decision of the respective School Based Committee is binding on the individual school.
6. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this policy, the questioner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee to the Board of School Trustees as the final review panel.

### **Guiding Principles**

1. Any resident or employee of the school 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.

2. The principal should review the selection and objection rules with the teaching staff at least annually. The staff should be reminded that the right to object to learning resources is one granted by policies enacted by the Board of School Trustees.
3. No parent has the right to determine reading, reviewing or listening matter for students other than his/her own children.
4. Although it is the learning resources which are challenged, the principles of the freedom to read/listen/view must be defended as well.
5. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
6. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
7. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

### **III. REQUEST FOR FORMAL RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS IN DISTRICT COLLECTIONS**

#### **Preliminary Procedures**

1. The staff of the District Resource Centre 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. The Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources form shall be signed by the questioner and filed with the District Resource Centre Coordinator.
3. The request for reconsideration shall be referred to the District Resource Centre Coordinator.

#### **The Appeal Committee**

1. The District Resource Centre Coordinator shall strike an Appeal Committee.
2. The appeal committee may choose to consult district support staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge.
3. The appeal committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the district's Selection of Learning Resources policy.

#### **Resolution**

1. The appeal committee shall proceed within these guidelines:
  - i) Examine the challenged resource.

- ii) Receive and consider written submissions and presentations by concerned community groups, in a public session which includes an opportunity for committee members to question presenters.
  - iii) Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resource.
  - iv) Weight values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
  - v) Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program.  
Prepare a written report.
2. The written report shall be discussed with the individual questioner if requested.
  3. The written report shall be retained by the District Resource Centre Coordinator with copies forwarded to the Superintendent.
  4. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by trustees and appropriate officials only.
  5. The decision of the reconsideration committee is binding on the district resource collection.
  6. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this policy, the questioner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee to the Board of Education as the final review panel.

### **Guiding Principles**

Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge learning resources 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.

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Board Approved and Codified: June 16, 1986

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Description:

**Appendix "A" - REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LEARNING RESOURCES**

Title of Resource: \_\_\_\_\_

Context of Usage:

Classroom Resource: \_\_\_\_\_ Correspondence Material: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Author(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Role of Complainant:

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ PC: \_\_\_\_\_

1. To what in the resource(s) do you object?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

a) page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Objection: \_\_\_\_\_

b) page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Objection: \_\_\_\_\_

c) page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Objection: \_\_\_\_\_

d) page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Objection: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you think is the theme or purpose of the resource?

\_\_\_\_\_

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3. What effect do you believe this resource would have on your son or daughter?

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4. What effect do you believe this resource would have on other students?

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5. Have you reviewed the entire resource?

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6. In many cases, the impact of a resource will vary according to how it is presented and interpreted in the classroom, and we urge you to discuss this material with the appropriate people. Have you discussed the resource with the:

Teacher? \_\_\_\_\_ Principal \_\_\_\_\_ School District Staff? \_\_\_\_\_

What was their response?

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Source of reviews (of the materials) you may have encountered? (attach photocopies, if available)

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If reviews of the materials are available that we have encountered , would you like copies?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. Additional Comments:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_