

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Challenged Controversial Materials

The board believes that the school should be responsive to inquiries from the community regarding instructional materials used in the schools. To meet this responsibility, the board directs the superintendent to establish procedures whereby complaints by a citizen or citizens of the school division regarding specific books, publications or materials used by or presented to the students may be processed in an orderly manner. The superintendent shall develop these procedures in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The board recognizes the right of the individual parents to request that their child not have to read a given book provided the parent makes a written request to the appropriate building principal.
2. Copies of all materials that are the subject of a complaint shall be made available to the complainant. A refundable deposit shall be required before materials are removed from school premises.
3. Complaints must be specific and in writing.
4. The complaint shall be referred to a committee representing the views of the students, parents, teaching staff and supervisory staff and having among its membership representatives of the committee that originally selected the material in question. The committee shall evaluate the challenged material in terms of the original criteria for selection and shall invite the complainant to present his views in person to the committee. After having reached a decision, the committee shall report its findings to the superintendent.
5. After a conference with the complainant, the superintendent shall render a decision.
6. The complainant may appeal the decision of the superintendent to the board. After having reviewed the complaint and the superintendent's recommendation, the board shall make a final decision.

Legal Reference:

Code of Va., § 22.1-253.13:7. Standard 7. Policy manual.--". . . D. Each local school board shall ensure that the policy manual include the following policies, which shall be developed giving consideration to the views of teachers, parents, and other concerned citizens . . .

2. A policy for the selection and evaluation of all instructional materials purchased by the school division, with clear procedures for handling challenged controversial materials; . . ." (1992)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Complaints from the Public

Challenged Controversial Materials (continued)

Editor's Note: Procedures for selecting and evaluating materials are established at #6-47 of this manual.

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