

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Complaints About Curricula or Instructional Materials

The Board of Education recognizes students' right of free access to many different types of books and instructional material and the right of teachers and administrators to recommend books and other materials for selection by the Board in accord with current trends in education, and to make them available in the schools.

The Board's aim is to provide materials that present all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times. Books and other instructional material shall be chosen for values of interest and enlightenment of all students in the community. A book shall not be excluded because of the race, nationality, political or religious views of its author or its style and language. Books and other instructional material of sound factual authority shall not be precluded from, nor removed from, the library or classrooms because of partisan or doctrinal, approval or disapproval.

Procedures for Handling Challenged Materials

All complaints concerning the textbooks, library books, and other instructional material shall be submitted to the superintendent of schools. The superintendent shall promulgate regulations subject to Board approval establishing a complaint procedure which shall include:

1. an opportunity for an informal conference with the complainant;
2. the submission of formal written complaints on a prescribed form;
3. the formation of an instructional material review committee. The members of the committee shall be recommended by the superintendent and appointed by the Board. The committee shall make recommendations to the superintendent concerning the disposition of any complaint;
4. a decision by the superintendent; and
5. an appeal to the Board of Education. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Procedures for Handling Complaints Concerning Curricula

All complaints concerning the content of any curriculum in the district shall be referred to the superintendent of schools. The superintendent shall promulgate regulations subject to Board approval establishing a complaint procedure similar to those established for complaints about instructional material. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Presentation: 10/4/89

First
Vote: 10/18/89

Second
Vote: 11/1/89

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Complaints About Curricula or Instructional Materials

Complaint Procedures concerning textbooks, library material and other instructional material.

The following procedures shall be employed in handling complaints concerning any textbook, library book or material, and any other instructional material used in the schools of the district.

1. At the discretion of the superintendent, an informal meeting may be held between the complainant and the superintendent.
2. If a complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant must file a written complaint with the superintendent and the president of the Board on a form provided for this purpose.
3. Any written complaint will be presented to the Instructional Material Review Committee. The membership of the committee, which shall be submitted to the Board of Education for approval, shall consist of: an elementary and secondary classroom teacher, an elementary and secondary principal or assistant principal, a library media specialist, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, who shall serve as chairman of the committee, and a member of the community. The committee shall:
 - a. read and examine the challenged materials
 - b. consider the specific objections to the material voiced by the complainant
 - c. weigh the values and faults of the material as a whole
 - d. consider whether oral presentations should be made to the committee
 - e. solicit, when appropriate, advice or opinion from other faculty and staff of the district
 - f. issue a report to the superintendent containing its recommendations concerning any complaint
4. The superintendent shall review the report of the committee, make a decision, and notify the complainant and appropriate staff.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the superintendent's decision, he may refer the complaint to the Board. The superintendent will deliver a copy of his decision and the committee's report to the Board for their consideration. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Complaint Procedures Concerning Curricula

The following procedures shall be employed in handling complaints concerning any curriculum in the district.

1. At the discretion of the superintendent, an informal meeting may be held between the complainant and the superintendent.
2. If a complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant must file a written complaint with the superintendent. Because the nature of the complaints may vary, no standard form is provided.
3. The superintendent shall review the complaint, consult with any district staff, state education department personnel, or any other organization or individual that he deems appropriate and make a decision regarding the complaint. The superintendent may designate any other administrator in the district to render a decision concerning a complaint.
4. The complainant and appropriate staff shall be informed, by the superintendent, of the decision.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent or his designee, he may refer the complaint to the Board, whose decision shall be final.

Request for Reevaluation of Instructional Materials

Request initiated by _____ Date _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

Complainant represents: Self _____ Group _____

If group, name of group _____

TITLE: _____ AUTHOR: _____

Publisher or Producer: _____

Publisher's recommended grade level _____

Books _____ AV material (please specify format) _____

Other _____

1. Have you read/heard/seen the material in its entirety?

2. To what do you specifically object? Please cite specific passages, pages, etc.

3. Is your objection to this material based upon your personal exposure to it, upon reports you have heard, or both?

4. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of the material?

5. What do you feel might be the result of reading/viewing this work?

6. In its place, what work of equal value would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of a society or a set of values?

7. Do you wish to make an oral presentation of fifteen minutes or less to the Materials Review Committee?

Date: _____ Signature: _____

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SELECTION FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MATERIALS

The West Genesee School District subscribes to the following School Library Bill of Rights of the ALA as our philosophy of materials selection.

School libraries are concerned with generating understanding of American freedoms and with the preservation of these freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizens. The responsibility of the school library is:

To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served.

To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily life.

To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The Board of Education, as the governing body of the school district, is legally responsible for the selection of library materials. Since the Board is a policy-making body, it delegates to professional personnel of the district the authority for the selection of materials.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO PROFESSIONAL STAFF

It is the right and responsibility of administrators, teachers, and librarians to select library materials to be included in the school libraries. Students and parents are encouraged to make suggestions as to selection of library materials, subject to approval or disapproval of the professional staff. Selection of materials will be assisted by the use of standard evaluation aids which are reputable, unbiased, and professionally prepared.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

1. Needs of the individual school
 - a. Based on the curriculum
 - b. Based on requests from administrators and teachers
2. Needs of the individual student
 - a. Based on knowledge of children and youth
 - b. Based on requests of parents and students
3. Provision of a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view (so that young citizens may develop, under guidance, the practice of critical reading and thinking).
4. Materials will be selected that will be representative of the many ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our society.
5. Materials will be selected that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic value and ethical standards.
6. The value and impact of any literary work will be judged as a whole, taking into account the author's intent rather than individual words, phrases, or incidents out of which it is made.
7. Educators, recognizing the maturity level of the student, may recommend for individual use, materials they feel will have educational significance.