

Series 5000: Students, Curriculum, and Academic Matters

5400 Curriculum, Instruction, and Parent/Guardian Involvement

5407 Instructional Program and Curriculum Development

The District will provide students with at least the minimum number of instructional hours and days each school year required by the state for full state aid funding. The District may deviate from this requirement only as permitted by state law.

The Board, advised by the Superintendent, will adopt a curriculum and procure textbooks and materials to support the curriculum.

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for providing and directing District-wide planning for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and staff development in accordance with Policy 2203. Committees consisting of educational professionals, including administrators, and community members, may be established to design instructional strategies and assessments to implement the curriculum.

A. Parent/Guardian Rights

As described in Policy 5401, the District will provide a parent/guardian the opportunity to review District-approved curriculum, textbooks, and instructional materials upon request to the building principal. See Policy 5401 for appropriate procedures.

B. Complaints about Instructional Materials

If a parent/guardian objects to their student's instructional materials, the following procedures will apply:

1. **First Level – Objection to Teacher.** The parent/guardian must submit an objection and explanation in writing to the relevant classroom teacher. The teacher will review the parent's/guardian's objection and either discontinue using the material or advise the parent/guardian of the educational and pedagogical reasons for the material.
2. **Second Level - Appeal to Building Principal.** If the parent/guardian disagrees with the teacher's response, the parent/guardian may submit a written appeal to the building principal stating the reasons why the parent/guardian objects to the materials. The building principal will confer with the relevant classroom teacher within 5 school days. The building principal will review the written objection and the materials in question to determine whether:
 - a. the stated objection outweighs the educational and pedagogical reasons;
 - b. the materials require the student to engage in conduct or practice that violates the student's sincerely held religious belief;

- c. the materials lack serious educational, literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for the age range of the students in question; or
- d. the materials are inappropriate or harmful for the age range of the students in question.

The building principal will provide all parties with a written response granting or denying the appeal within 10 school days after conferring with the teacher.

3. Third Level – Committee Review. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the building principal’s response, the parent/guardian may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent within 5 school days after receiving the building principal’s response. The Superintendent will create a committee to review the appeal. The committee will review the parent’s/guardian’s written objection, the building principal’s written response, the parent’s/guardian’s written appeal, the materials being challenged, and any other information the committee deems relevant. The committee will issue a written decision within 30 calendar days of receiving the appeal based on the factors described in Section 2 above. The committee’s decision is final.

C. Selection of Library and Media Materials

The Board is responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the schools, including the provision of library and media materials which are made available for use by students and staff within the school libraries.

While the Board maintains its authority to review, approve, deny, remove, or otherwise control the library and media materials found within or available through the school libraries, the Board recognizes the educational experience and expertise of its professional staff and the need for such staff to be involved in the recommendation and selection of library and media materials. The Board delegates responsibility for the recommendation and selection of library and media materials to the Superintendent, subject to the criteria and procedures for recommendation and selection and the Board’s policy on challenged materials as described below.

The inclusion of library and media materials within a District school library does not mean that the District, Board, or any District employee or other representative advocates for or endorses the content of that item.

Definition: For the purposes of this policy, “library and media materials” include books and other print materials, software and other electronic materials, online/internet resources, and supplies and other materials and resources accessible to students and staff through the District’s school libraries.

The primary objective of all library and media materials is to assist and support the implementation of the educational program within the District’s schools. The Board believes that it is the responsibility of the District’s school libraries to make

available library and media materials that address a wide range of topics, present diversity of appeal, and represent differing viewpoints, including viewpoints which may be controversial or disagreed with.

Except as is otherwise stated in this policy, the Board delegates the identification, review, selection, placement and/or use, and removal of library and media materials to the Superintendent subject to the following procedures:

1. The Superintendent shall create a committee who shall review recommendations for the purchase and/or placement of library and media materials within the District's school libraries. The Superintendent shall make reasonable effort to ensure that the committee is comprised of individuals representing various viewpoints and interests, however, the identification of committee members shall be the exclusive responsibility and right of the Superintendent. Committee members may be, but are not required to be, employees of the District. Committee members shall generally serve for a period of two years, provided, however, that any committee member may resign from the committee at any time and/or the Superintendent may remove any member from the committee if, in the opinion of the Superintendent, the District's interests are best served by doing so.
2. Not more frequently than quarterly, the District's media center specialists shall compile a list of library and media materials that the media center specialist desires to purchase and/or make available through the school library. The list shall be provided to the Superintendent.
3. The Superintendent shall share the list of library and media materials recommended by the media center specialist(s) with the committee responsible for reviewing recommendations for the purchase and/or placement of library and media materials within the District's school libraries.
4. Within a reasonable time after receiving a list of recommended library and media materials, the committee shall meet for the purposes of approving and/or denying the purchase, placement, and/or use of the library and media materials within the District's libraries. The committee shall consider the following factors when determining whether to approve or deny the purchase, placement, and/or use of library and media materials within the District's libraries:
 - a. Does the library and media material support achievement of the school improvement plan and goals?
 - b. Does the library and media material support the goals and objectives of the school's educational programs?

- c. Does the library and media material support and enrich the school curriculum?
 - d. Does the library and media material properly take into consideration the varied interests, abilities, ages, and maturity levels of the students served within the school?
 - e. Does the library and media material foster respect and appreciation for diversity and varied opinions and viewpoints?
 - f. Does the library and media material provide factual, balanced information of opposing sides of controversial issues to enable students to develop a capability for critical analysis?
 - g. Does the library and media material stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards?
 - h. Is the library and media material appropriate for the age and development of the students within the school?
 - i. Does the library and media material factually represent current or historical events that are relevant and important to the community?
 - j. Does the library and media material have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value?
5. The District shall only purchase, provide, and make available to District students and staff those library and media materials which have been approved by the committee described in this policy.

Library and media materials which have previously been approved by the selection committee and which have become worn or missing, may be replaced by the media specialist outside of the selection process described in this policy.

Library and media materials which are pornographic, sensational, or titillating, and/or which feature obscenities, lewd conduct, or excessive profanity are prohibited.

D. Rights of Parents/Guardians

A District student's parent or guardian may inspect, upon reasonable request and in a manner that does not result in disruption to the educational program, any library and media materials which are made available to or for use by students through the District's school libraries.

The Board recognizes that the final authority as to what library and media materials a student will be allowed to access through the school's libraries belongs to the student's parents or guardians. However, at no time will one parent's wishes to restrict their student's access to a particular library and media material infringe on the rights of other parents or guardians to allow their student to access the same library and media material.

E. Challenged Library and Media Materials

The Board recognizes that objections may be raised by students, parents, District employees, and/or other community members regarding the library and media materials made available through the District's school libraries.

Individual students, parents of District students, District employees, and/or any other resident of the District may file a written complaint with the Superintendent objecting to any specific library and media material that is made available through the District's school libraries. The written complaint must identify the library and media material(s) to which the individual objects and the reason for the objection.

The library and media material(s) which are objected to will remain in general circulation and/or available to access until such time as the review, consideration, and disposition of the complaint has concluded.

When the Superintendent receives a written objection to library and media materials, the Superintendent shall convene a committee, which shall be separate from the selection committee identified above, consisting of the following individuals: one District school principal; one District classroom teacher; and one parent/guardian of a District student. The committee shall review the complaint. The review process shall consist of each committee member reading and/or examining the library and media material(s) which have been objected to. The committee shall then consider the appropriateness of the library and media material(s) based on the selection factors set forth above (a – j). Within a reasonable time after receiving the complaint, the committee shall provide a written recommendation to the Superintendent. The recommendation must state whether the objected to library and media material(s) should remain or be removed from the District's school library and the rationale for the committee's decision based on the listed factors.

The Superintendent shall inform the complainant of the committee's decision.

Any library and media material which is identified by the committee for removal shall be removed from general circulation/availability within the school library as soon as practicably possible after the committee has recommended removal/discontinuance.

The complainant may appeal the committee's decision to the Board. The Board will review the evidence available to it regarding why the library and media materials were selected for placement within the school library, why the complainant believes that the library and media material should be

removed/discontinued, and why the committee arrived at its decision. After consideration of the evidence and the selection factors set forth above (a - j), the Board shall vote on whether to maintain or remove/discontinue the challenged library and media material(s). The Board's decision shall be final.

The Superintendent may, in his or her sole discretion, designate review to another administrator or employee. The Superintendent or designee will endeavor to provide a written response to the parent/guardian within 30 calendar days after receiving the objection. The Superintendent or designee's decision is final.

The District will not restrict access to the challenged material during the review process.

Legal authority: MCL 380.1137, 388.1706

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