

INSTRUCTION

IN GENERAL

REGULATION

§5-7 Selection and Review of Library Media Center Instructional Materials

A. General

This regulation supplements Policy §5-7 by providing methods and procedures for the selection, review, and handling of complaints of instructional materials.

B. Selection of Materials

Instructional materials shall be selected in accordance with the following procedures and guidelines:

1. Library media center materials shall be selected by the library media specialist of each school in consultation with the principal or designee, appropriate teachers, and other specialized personnel if available. Final recommendations for purchase shall be made by the library media specialist and approved by the principal or designee.
2. Division media center materials shall be purchased by the Media Supervisor based upon recommendations of school-level previewers or appropriate administrative/supervisory personnel.
3. Textbook adoptions shall be recommended by review committees appointed by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. State guidelines for adoption of textbooks shall be followed. Recommendations of review committees shall be approved and submitted to the School Board by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.
4. Other instructional materials shall be selected cooperatively by appropriate subject or grade-level teaching personnel, library media specialists, guidance personnel, and administrative personnel.
5. Parents and students may be involved in the selection process when appropriate and useful.

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6. Selection objectives shall be:
 - a. To provide materials that will support and enrich the curriculum and the needs of students, taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities, maturity levels, and learning styles
 - b. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards
 - c. To provide materials that will help students extend the boundaries of their knowledge and experience, pursue self-directed learning, explore and satisfy their curiosities and interests, and find employment in the rich stores of the imaginative expressions of creative artists
 - d. To provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent decisions in their daily lives
 - e. To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues in order that students may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading, viewing, listening, and thinking
 - f. To provide materials that realistically represents our pluralistic society and reflects the contributions made by various groups and individuals to our American heritage
 - g. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice to assure a comprehensive media collection of high quality appropriate for the students who use it

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7. Criteria for selection. Building a balanced collection requires careful planning and attention to the following criteria for selection:
 - a. Specific needs of the present collection
 - b. Contribution to objectives of the instructional program
 - c. Timeliness, permanence, and importance of the subject matter
 - d. Appropriateness, accuracy, and authenticity of the content and the reputation and significance of the author, artist, composer, producer, and publisher
 - e. Authoritativeness, accuracy, and authenticity of the content and the reputation and significance of the author, artist, composer, producer, and publisher
 - f. Presentation, style, and clarity of content
 - g. Motivational value of materials in terms of attractiveness, vitality, style, and interest to users
 - h. Lack of racial, sex, and age bias
 - i. Recency and relevance of materials and treatment of possible controversial issues
 - j. Technical quality of the medium
 - k. Suitability of the medium for intended use
 - l. Availability and compatibility of equipment needed for use with materials

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- m. Cost and value of materials
- n. State, regional, and national standards

C. Review of Materials

Evaluation and long-range planning are essential to the maintenance of a balanced collection of useful, current instructional materials. Projected enrollments, curriculum needs, accreditation standards, and technological changes must be considered in long-range planning.

Each library media center should have a plan for meeting future needs over a three to five-year period and periodically publish such a plan to the School Board. An annual review of materials should be conducted to eliminate obsolete, damaged, or unusable materials and update the long-range plan. This may be done when taking the annual inventory or it could be planned to review a section of the collection each month. Faculty members should be encouraged to assist in the review process in their areas of instructional expertise.

The following types of materials should be eliminated from the collection during the review process:

1. Those worn beyond repair at reasonable cost
2. Aged, unattractive materials that no longer appeal to users
3. Those damaged beyond repair
4. Those obsolete or containing misinformation
5. Those superseded by new editions
6. Those not suitable for the students served
7. Those uncirculated over a reasonable period of time

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D. Procedure for Review of Challenged Materials

Objections to instructional materials shall be considered objectively under the procedure set forth in this paragraph. The principle of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, the best interests of the students, school, and curriculum, and requirements of state law and regulations shall underlie all considerations of challenged materials.

The procedure for reviewing objections to instructional materials shall be:

1. A parent (which is understood to include legal guardians) of a child enrolled in Loudoun County Public Schools may state an objection to and request a review of material(s) used in the instruction of that child or accessible to that child.

2. Requests for review of material(s) shall be submitted in writing using the form, *Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials*, (available on the LCPS website) and objections shall be specific as to the material(s) and reason(s) for the objections. Complainant must also state their desired disposition.

3. Requests for review shall be made to the principal of the school the child attends. The principal shall appoint a committee of appropriate personnel to review the material(s) and make a recommendation to the principal on the disposition of the complaint. The recommendation shall be one of the following: (1) Material(s) remain(s) in general circulation; (2) material(s) restricted to teachers and parents; (3) material(s) are sent to a school at the next level; or (4) material(s) are removed from circulation.

4. The principal shall notify the parent(s) who requested the review of his/her decision in writing within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the written request.

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5. The decision of the principal may be appealed by the parent(s) who requested the review. Such appeal must be made in writing to the Division Superintendent within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the decision being appealed. If the decision is not appealed within this time limit, the principal's decision on the request for review shall be final.

6. If the decision of the principal is appealed in accordance with the requirements listed above, the Superintendent shall appoint a division review committee, which shall include the educational supervisor(s) responsible for such material(s), to review the material(s) and to make a recommendation to the Superintendent on the disposition of the complaint.

7. The Division Superintendent shall notify the parent(s) of his/her decision in writing within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the written appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be district wide at the level challenged.

8. The decision of the Division Superintendent may be appealed to the School Board by the parent(s) who requested the appeal as hereinafter set forth. If the decision of the Division Superintendent is not appealed, it shall be final.

9. Notwithstanding these requirements, the School board shall be notified within fifteen (15) business days of any decision by the Division Superintendent to restrict access to material(s). In addition to notifying the School Board of any decision to restrict access district-wide, the staff will also post such notice on the LCPS website and make such notice available to the public and media as part of its regular dissemination of public notices and board documents. Upon written request for a review of this decision by three members of the School Board within thirty (30) business days of receipt of such notice, the Chairman shall appoint and refer such to a three-member committee which shall make the final decision in accordance with the requirements hereof. The decision of the three-member school board committee shall be district-wide at the level challenged.

10. All material(s) in process of being reviewed shall remain in use or circulation until a final decision is reached.

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11. Any material(s) challenged and decided at the school level without appeal to the Division Superintendent shall not be eligible for challenge under this policy by any parent at that same school until at least four years have elapsed from the original decision by the principal. However, this does not prevent the school principal, acting under his/her responsibility for the administration of the educational program in that school, from initiating such action on their own and restricting the use of such material(s) before four years have elapsed if the principal deems such action is warranted.

12. Any material(s) challenged and decided at the division level, either by the Superintendent or the School Board committee, shall not be eligible for challenge under this policy by any parent until at least four years have elapsed from the original decision. However, this does not prevent the Superintendent, acting on his/her own responsibility for the administration of the educational program in the division, from initiating such action on their own and restricting the use of such material(s) before four years have elapsed if the Superintendent deems such action is warranted, provided the School Board is notified of such action and following which, should three members of the School Board request a review in writing within thirty (30) business days of receipt of such notice, the Chairman shall refer such issue to a three-member committee which shall make the final decision. Further, prior to four years having elapsed from the original final decision at the division level, four members of the School Board may request in writing to the Chairman of the School Board that a review of the decision be conducted, and the Chairman shall then appoint a three-member committee provided that at least one year shall have elapsed from the original final decision.

E. Appeals and Review – School Board

1. Appeals or requests for review must be submitted in writing to the Division Superintendent within ten (10) school days of his/her decision unless otherwise herein provided. The appeal must state fully the reasons and basis for the appeal and a summary of the essential facts. A request for review shall simply request that the matter be reviewed.

2. The Division Superintendent shall notify the Chairman of the School Board of his/her receipt of the appeal or request for review. The Chairman shall appoint a committee of three members to consider and decide the appeal or review the materials and appoint one of those members as Chairman.

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3. The Division Superintendent or his/her designee shall collect statements from all persons involved in making decisions related to the case. These statements shall contain a summary of the essential facts of the case and the basis of each decision, including references to applicable School Board policies. A copy of these statements shall be provided to each member of the committee considering the matter. In the case of an appeal, such statements shall be provided to the appellant(s).

4. The committee shall review the statements of school personnel and the appeal, the challenged material, any committee recommendations and may affirm, modify or annul the decision of the Division Superintendent on the basis of this review. If the committee makes a decision on the basis of this review, that decision shall be communicated to the appellant(s) (where appropriate) and shall be reported at the next regular meeting of the School Board for inclusion in the Minutes of that meeting.

5. If the committee determines that it needs more information, the Chairman thereof has the right to request additional information prior to a final decision by the committee. The Chairman will set reasonable deadlines for providing the additional information. In the case of an appeal, any additional information collected by the committee will be provided to the Division Superintendent and to the appellants.

6. This appeals and review procedure shall be completed and a decision communicated to the appellant(s) (where appropriate) within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the appeal by the Division Superintendent, except that any additional time allowed under paragraph 5 for collection and processing of additional information will be added to the thirty (30) days.

7. A summary of the committee's findings shall be provided to all School Board members.

Legal Reference: Code of Virginia §22.1-253.13:7

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

SCHOOL:

Please check type of material:

Book DVD Kit Pamphlet Periodical Video Cassette Other

Title:

Author:

Publisher or Producer:

(Person making request must be the parent or guardian of an LCPS student.)

Request Initiated by:

Telephone:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Email Address:

The following questions are to be answered after the complainant has read, reviewed, or listened to the material in its entirety.

1. To what in the material do you object (please be specific, cite pages, film sequence, etc.)?

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

3. What do you feel might be the result of a student using this material?

4. For what age group would you recommend this material?

5. Is there anything good in this material? Please comment.

6. Would you care to recommend other material of the same subject and format?

7. State desired disposition of this material.

Signature of Complainant:

Date:

Please return completed form to the school principal