

OBJECTION TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND  
MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

Members of the school district community may object to the instructional materials utilized in the school district and ask for their use to be reconsidered.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principals, to develop administrative regulations for reconsideration of instructional materials.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2003).

Cross Reference: 215 Public Participation in Board Meetings  
402.5 Public Complaints About Employees  
602 Curriculum Development  
605 Instructional Materials

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## OBJECTION TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The board of directors of the Fairfield Community School District hereby declares it the policy of the district to provide a wide range of instructional materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal, and the presentation of different points of view and to allow review of allegedly inappropriate instructional materials.

### I. Responsibility for Selection of Materials

- a. The board of directors is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the Fairfield Community School District.
- b. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained and certified staff employed by the school system. For the purpose of this rule the term “materials” includes printed, non-print, computer and other electronic materials and information (not equipment), whether considered text materials or library media center materials including information accessed through the use of educational technology.
- c. While selection of materials involves many people (principals, teachers, students, supervisors, community persons, and media specialists), the responsibility for coordinating the selection of most instructional materials and making the recommendation for purchase rests with certified media personnel. For the purpose of this rule the term “media specialist” includes librarians, school media specialists, or other appropriate certified persons responsible for selection of media.
- d. Responsibility for coordinating the selection of text materials for distribution to classes will rest with the appropriate department chairperson or with the textbook evaluation committee. For the purpose of this rule the term “text materials” includes textbooks and other print and non-print material provided in multiple copies for use of a total class or a major segment of such a class.

### II. Criteria for Selection of Materials

- a. The following criteria will be used as they apply:
  1. Materials will support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the district and the objectives of specific courses.
  2. Materials will be factually accurate and objective in content and presentation.
  3. Materials will be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
  4. Materials will have aesthetic, literary, or social value.
  5. Materials chosen will be by competent and qualified authors and producers.

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6. Materials will be chosen that are designed to motivate students and staff to gain an awareness and understanding of the many important contributions of women, minorities, and ethnic groups. These materials will help them examine and comprehend their own attitudes, duties, rights, responsibilities, and privileges as participating citizens in a pluralistic, non-sexist society.
  7. Biased slanted materials may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives.
  8. Physical format and appearance of materials will be suitable for their intended use.
  9. Price may be a consideration when viewing overall use of materials.
  10. Recommendations from faculty and students are given consideration.
  11. Materials and information will be selected for its strengths rather than rejected for its weaknesses.
  11. Materials and information will be included to make clear the important role religion has had in shaping every age and culture.
- b. The selection of materials and information on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

### III. Procedure for Selection

- a. Library Media Center Materials
  1. In selecting materials for purchase for the media center, the media specialist will evaluate the existing collection and the curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate sources. (i.e. School Library Journal, Booklist, etc.) For the purpose of this rule the term "media" includes all materials considered part of the library collection.
  2. Gift materials will be judged by the criteria in Section II and will be accepted or rejected by those criteria. Such materials will not be accepted if subject to restrictions on use or disposal or if they would produce an imbalance the library media center cannot afford to redress.
  3. Selection is an ongoing process which will include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.

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b. Text Materials

Study committees are appointed and study various educational programs on a scheduled basis. Toward the end of the study of a particular program, the study committee reviews various educational materials that would appear to facilitate the teaching and learning of the skills and knowledge of that program. Usually a selected group of materials, including textbooks, are submitted to most teachers who teach a given program. These teachers provide the study committee their opinions and suggestions about materials. The committee then selects the materials they consider to be of greatest help to the teachers and students in meeting the objectives that have been established for that program. In turn these materials are recommended to the administration for adoption.

c. Interlibrary Loan, Networks, Telecommunications, etc.

The content of materials received from other sources such as interlibrary loan, telecommunications, networks, electronic bulletin boards, etc. cannot be viewed beforehand or controlled. These sources are made available to meet educational goals and objectives, for teaching research skills, and for providing materials of interest that are not available locally. These sources of information help acquaint students with information from the world at large.

d. Confidentiality of School Library Media Centers

The employees of Fairfield Community School District recognize that circulation records of the School Library Media Centers are confidential in nature and that these records will not be made available to anyone including any agency of state, federal, and local government except pursuant to federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative investigatory power. This is done to protect the freedom of users to read and peruse information without fear of intimidation or harassment. The purpose of these records is for the retrieval of overdue materials and for statistical analysis of library use.

e. Copyright Law

The Fairfield Community School District will obey the Copyright Act of 1976 and the guidelines of fair use established by the Copyright Office.

Section 107 of the Act provides that:

the fair use of a copyrighted work...for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered will include

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of commercial nature or is for non-profit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

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IV. Weeding

- a. The library media specialist(s) will remove from the library media center materials, equipment and furniture no longer of value to the library media program following general selection, replacement, and weeding guidelines. (See, e.g., “Weeding the School Library Media Center Collections, Iowa Department of Education, 1995.)
- b. Text materials committees or other designated teachers or teacher committees may remove text materials no longer of value to the instructional program following general selection, replacement, and weeding guidelines. The materials will be reviewed by the committee or person designated to determine their possible intrinsic worth to other groups or individuals in the following priority order:
  1. To another unit of the school.
  2. To other school in the district.
  3. To the general public. If deemed of sufficient value, the district will offer items for sale at a stated time.
  4. If items are determined to be of no value, or if no group or individual under points 1-3 above claims them, items will be discarded in a manner consistent with the district’s procedures for discard.

V. Review or Reevaluation

- a. Any resident or employee of the school district may ask that a specific title or titles in the instructional materials used in the district’s educational program be reviewed or reexamined. (The term “review” used in this section will refer to reexamination or reevaluation of material based on a “request for review.” It should not be confused with the normal reviewing process as a part of selection.) This will not be considered to reflect adversely on the qualifications of the person or persons who made the selection.
  1. The school official or staff member receiving a request for review or reexamination regarding instructional materials will try to resolve the issue informally. The materials will remain in use unless removed through the formal procedure herein provided.
  2. The school official or staff member initially receiving a request for review will explain to the requester the school district’s selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material. These people will also explain the place this material occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its usefulness.

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3. In the event that the person asking for the review is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person raising the question should be referred to the library media specialist and/or principal. If, after this discussion, the person wishes to file a formal request for review, the school official should assist in filling out a "Request for Review" form.
  4. The school official or staff member receiving the "Request for Review" form should notify the principal of the appropriate attendance center about the inquiry in writing by the end of the following school day. The written notification should indicate name, material and resolution if any. The principal or other designated person will file a report for the Review Committee's records.
- b. Request for Review
1. Each attendance center and the school district's central office will keep on hand and make available "Request for Review" forms. All formal requests for review must be made on this form.
  2. Within five days after receiving the form, the superintendent of designee will file the request with the standing Review Committee.
- c. Review committee
1. The Review Committee will be made up of thirteen members.
    - a. Three teachers – one middle school, one senior high and one elementary, designated annually by the superintendent.
    - b. Three school media specialists will be named to the committee. The media specialist responsible for the attendance center where the item being reexamined originated will not serve on the committee for that review.
    - c. One member of the central administrative staff designated annually by the superintendent.
    - d. Four members from the community appointed annually by Fairfield Community School Board action.
    - e. One high school student and one middle school student selected annually. The middle school student will be selected by the principal. Recommendations for the senior high student will come from the principal with selection by the student council.
    - f. One School Board member appointed annually by School Board action.

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2. The chairperson and secretary will be selected by the members of the committee. The chairperson will not be an employee or officer of the district. The secretary will be an employee or officer of the district.
  3. The committee will receive the Materials Selection Policy and all “Request for Review” forms from the superintendent or person designated by the superintendent.
- d. Review Process
1. The first meeting will consist of the Review Committee. The procedure following receipt of the “Request for Review” is as follows:
    - a. Distribute copies of the written “Request for Review” form.
    - b. Distribute reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the material when available.
    - c. Distribute copies of the material if available.
  2. Before the next meeting committee members will read and examine completely the materials being reviewed. Opinions will be based on the material as a whole and not on passages pulled out of context. The secretary will inform the press of the date of the next meeting.
  3. At a subsequent meeting, interested persons, including the person requesting the review, may have the opportunity to share their views. The committee may request individuals with special knowledge to present information to the committee.
  4. The person requesting the review will be kept informed by the secretary concerning the status of the review through the committee process. All known interested parties will be given appropriate notice of committee meetings.
  5. At the second or subsequent meeting, as desired, the committee will make its recommendation in open session. The committee’s final recommendation will be by majority vote
    - a. to take no action;
    - b. to remove all or part of the material from the total school environment;
    - c. to allow student to use alternate titles, approved by school personnel involved; or
    - d. to limit the educational use of the material.

The sole criteria for the final recommendation is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.

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6. The written recommendation and its justification will be forwarded to the superintendent for appropriate action and to the person initiating the request and to the appropriate attendance centers.
7. A recommendation of the committee to remove or limit use of the material will not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection or use of the material.
8. Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, or request for review of materials will be excused from the committee during the deliberation on such materials. The superintendent may appoint a temporary replacement for the excused committee member, but such replacement will be of the same general qualifications of a member excused.
9. Requests for Review which have previously been before the committee must receive approval of a majority of the committee members before the materials will again be reviewed. Requests with less than a two-year lapse will not be considered. Every Request for Review form will be acted upon by the committee.
10. If not satisfied with the recommendation of the committee, and person may appeal the decision to the Board of Education, in which case the matter will be placed on the agenda of the next regular scheduled meeting of the board.
11. Any person dissatisfied with the decision of the board may appeal to the State Board of Education pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 290.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (1995).

Cross Reference: 213 Public Participation in Board Meetings  
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