

OBJECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

A member of the school district community may raise an objection to instructional materials used in the school district's education program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection and followed the proper procedure and observed the criteria for selecting such material.

1. The school official or employee receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials will try to resolve the issue informally. The materials will remain in use pending the outcome of the reconsideration procedure.
 - a. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the board's selection procedure, criteria to be met by the instructional materials, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material.
 - b. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the role of the objected material in the education program, its intended educational purpose, and additional information regarding its use. In the alternative, the employee may refer the individual to the media specialist who can identify and explain the use of the material.
2. The employee receiving the initial complaint will advise the building principal of the initial contact no later than the end of the school day following the discussion with the individual, whether or not the individual has been satisfied by the initial contact. A written record of the contact is maintained by the principal in charge of the attendance center. Each building principal shall inform employees of their obligation to report complaints.
3. In the event the individual making an objection to instructional materials is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the individual is referred to the principal of the attendance center. If, after consultation with the principal, the individual desires to file a formal complaint, the principal will assist in the individual obtaining the Reconsideration Request Form.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2014).

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

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B. Request for Reconsideration

1. A member of the school district community may formally challenge instructional materials on the basis of appropriateness used in the school district's education program. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the school district and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.
2. Each attendance center and the school district's central administrative office will keep on hand and make available Reconsideration Request Forms. Formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
3. The individual will state the specific reason the instructional material is being challenged. The Reconsideration Request Form is signed by the individual and filed with the superintendent.
4. The superintendent will promptly file the objection with the reconsideration committee for re-evaluation.
5. Generally, access to challenged instructional material will not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the instructional material may be removed temporarily as directed by the superintendent.
6. The Reconsideration Committee
 - a. The reconsideration committee is made up:
 - (1) Two teachers
 - (2) One media specialist
 - (3) The Director of Learning and Collaboration
 - (4) Three Parents
 - (5) When appropriate, two students
 - b. The committee will meet at the request of the superintendent.
 - c. Special meetings may be called by the board to consider temporary removal of materials in unusual circumstances. A recommendation for temporary removal will require a two-thirds vote of the committee.
 - d. Notice of committee meetings is made public through appropriate publications and other communications methods.
 - e. The committee will receive the completed Reconsideration Request Form from the superintendent.
 - f. The committee may review the selection process for the challenged instructional material and may to its satisfaction, determine that the challenge is without merit and dismiss the challenge. The committee will notify the superintendent of its recommendation.

- g. The individual filing the challenge is kept informed by the reconsideration committee on the status of the Reconsideration Request Form throughout the reconsideration process. The individual filing the challenge and known interested parties is given appropriate notice of meetings.
- h. At the second or a subsequent meeting the committee will make its final recommendation. The committee's final recommendation may be to take no removal action, to remove the challenged material from the school environment, or to limit the educational use of the challenged material. The sole criterion for the final recommendation is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use. The written final recommendation and its justification are forwarded to the superintendent and the individual that challenged the material. Following the decision with respect to the committee's recommendation, the individual or the chairperson of the reconsideration committee may appeal the decision to the board of education for review. The board of education may also make a recommendation but if so, it should be independent from the committee's. The board will consider the committee recommendation at a regularly scheduled board meeting.
- j. A recommendation to sustain a challenge will not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the individuals involved in the original selection or use of the material.
- k. Requests to reconsider materials which have previously been reconsidered by the committee must receive approval of two-thirds of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered. Completed and filed Reconsideration Request Forms are acted upon by the committee.
- l. If necessary or appropriate in the judgment of the committee, the committee may appoint a subcommittee of members or nonmembers to consolidate challenges and to make recommendations to the full committee. The composition of this subcommittee will approximate the representation of the full committee.
- m. Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, or challenger of the challenged material are excused from the committee during the deliberation of the challenged instructional materials.
- n. Persons dissatisfied with the decision of the board may appeal to the Iowa Board of Education pursuant to state law.