

## Controversial Issues

1. Selection of materials and issues for educational study
  - a. The maturity level of the students.
  - b. Interest to the students.
  - c. Timelines and relevance to the course and grade level.
  - d. The qualifications of the teacher to handle the material or issues in a professional manner.
  - e. Availability of adequate data.
2. Responsibility of administration
  - a. Administrators will base all judgments upon Board policy and accompanying administrative regulations.
  - b. Administrators will ensure staff understanding and compliance with district policy and administrative regulations for materials selection and controversial issues.
3. Responsibility of staff
  - a. Teachers have the instructional responsibility to examine a variety of positions taken, popular and unpopular, concerning a particular controversial issue.
  - b. Teachers have the instructional responsibility to assist students to discover and identify areas of commonality and areas of disagreement, while recognizing that student opinions need not be the same.
  - c. In the examination of controversial issues, teachers have the right to express their own opinions, while recognizing that the classroom should not be used as a vehicle to promote their own personal opinions and beliefs.
  - d. Teachers have the instructional responsibility to exemplify and encourage rationality and mature behavior in studying controversial issues.
  - e. Teachers have the instructional responsibility to demonstrate that preparation and planning have taken place for the study of controversial issues.
  - f. The methods and materials used in teaching shall be the decision of the individual teacher.

### **Procedure for Review of Complaint Associated with the Handling of Controversial Issues in the School**

1. Filing of Complaint: All complaints should be presented in writing to the school principal and shall be acknowledged by the principal in writing within five working days. (A form is available from the district office.) Also, all teachers directly involved shall be notified within five working days following the filing of the complaints.

2. The principal, within five working days of receipt of the written complaint, will forward a copy of the complaint to the superintendent or designee and involved building staff members with a copy of his/her acknowledgment to the complainant.
3. The superintendent or designee will, upon receipt of the complaint, determine the appropriate review committee to be established.
  - a. A building level review committee shall be formed when the complaint deals with a program activity or materials unique to that school building.
    1. A building level review committee shall be composed of the principal, teachers directly involved, the director of administrative services who will chair the meeting and the complainant.
  - b. A district level review committee shall be formed when the complaint concerns a program, activity or materials common to all schools of similar grade levels within the district.
    1. A district level review committee shall be composed of the director of administrative services or his/her designee who will chair the meeting, a media specialist if appropriate, teacher or teachers directly involved, a lay person, a principal and the complainant. If a district media specialist is not one of the designees, he/she may be requested to attend the meeting.

#### Committee Review Procedure

1. Copies of the complaint shall be given to all members. Committee members will be expected to read and review the material. The building review committee shall make recommendations to the principal within 15 working days of the first committee meeting date, a copy of which will be forwarded to the superintendent.
2. The district review committee shall prepare a report of recommendations for the superintendent within 15 working days.
3. The committee recommendation will be either to dismiss the complaint or support the complaint.

#### Superintendent Review/Decision Procedure

1. The superintendent or designee shall review the committee recommendations and then decide whether to dismiss or support the complaint.
2. The superintendent or designee shall notify the complainant of his/her decision within five working days after receiving the recommendations of the review committee.
3. The superintendent or designee shall notify the Board of all complaints filed and shall inform the Board of his/her decision on each complaint.

4. The superintendent or designee shall notify in writing all building principals, cabinet members and district media specialist of the decision of each complaint.
5. The complainant may appeal the decision of the superintendent to the Board in the manner prescribed in Board policy BDDC - Construction of Agenda/Advance Delivery of Meeting Materials.

### Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials/Issue

Request Initiated By: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant represents: Self: \_\_\_\_\_

1. To what do you object?
  - a. Material: Please cite specific passages, pages or objectionable ideas, title and publisher
  - b. Issue: Please identify specific circumstances and nature of the issue
2. What do you feel may result from presenting this material/issue in the schools?
3. To what age group would you recommend presenting this material or dealing with this issue?
4. What do you find of value in this material/issue?
5. What do you believe is the main idea of this material?
6. Why do you believe this material/issue is being treated in the school?
7. Have you seen or read this material in its entirety?
8. What would you like your school to do about this material/issue?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not expose my child to a classroom situation concerning this material/issue.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not wish further exposure.

\_\_\_\_\_ Withdraw it from all students.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send it back to the appropriate department for reevaluation.

In its place, what would you recommend that would convey a true picture and perspective concerning this matter?