

Community Relations

Public Complaints

Board members shall refer persons making complaints about the schools to the most immediate level at which the problems can be resolved and, as may be necessary, through lines of organization to the Superintendent of Schools. Parents should be made aware of the proper channels of communication and appeal. The decision of the principal regarding a student must include notice to the parents on the next step of appeal. Any appeal, from the decision of the Superintendent to the Board shall be in writing and signed.

Upon receipt of a written petition signed by one percent of the voters or fifty voters, whichever is greater, the Board of Education shall hold a public hearing on any question specified in the petition within three weeks of receipt of the petition.

The Superintendent, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Board to discuss the complaint. Generally, all parties involved, including the school administration, shall be asked to attend such a meeting for the purpose of presenting additional facts, making further explanations, and clarifying the issues.

The Board may request a disinterested third party to act as a moderator to help it reach a mutually satisfactory solution. After the Board's decision, the usual appeal route pertains.

Any parent, guardian, or other person who insults or abuses any teacher or other employee on school property or in the presence of students may be prosecuted by the district under the provisions of law.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General statutes: [10-238](#) Petition for hearing by board of education

Policy Adopted: July 7, 1993

Policy Revised: March 1, 2017

BRISTOL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bristol, Connecticut

Community Relations

Public Complaints

Complaints about Instructional Materials

It is recognized that opinions differ concerning appropriateness of instructional materials. The following procedures shall establish a system of receiving, considering, and acting upon written complaints regarding instructional materials in use:

1. All complaints must be presented in writing to the building principal and must be signed and identified in such a way that a proper reply can be made by the principal.
2. The complaint must include the name of the author, title, publisher, and the objections indicated by pages and items.
3. In cases of complaints regarding materials other than printed materials, written information specifying the precise nature of the objection must be given.
4. Upon receipt of a complaint, the principal shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and answer any questions after discussion with the personnel involved in making the selection of instructional materials.
5. The principal will inform the Superintendent of Schools in writing of the complaint and of his/her subsequent response to the person or group making the complaint.
6. Allegations not resolved at the building principal level shall be considered by a committee appointed by the Superintendent of Schools to judge the instructional materials involved in the complaint as to conformity to the procedures for selecting hall materials. A written decision be submitted by the committee to the Superintendent of Schools.
7. Committee membership to judge complaints will change to meet each occasion. Members may be teachers, department heads, library media teachers, coordinators, supervisors, principals, school medical adviser, school nurse, or any other person the Superintendent of Schools believes appropriate for the occasion.
8. Appeals regarding the decision of the committee shall be made in writing to the Superintendent of Schools. After due consideration of all information made available to him/her, The Superintendent of Schools shall render his/her decision in writing and notify the Board of Education of developments to date.
9. Appeals regarding the decision of the Superintendent of Schools shall be made in writing via the Superintendent's office to the Board of Education for its decision which will be sent in writing to the person or group making the complaint.

Use of Challenged Material

1. An individual student may be excused from using instructional materials under consideration due to a complaint after the parent or guardian has filed the complaint pursuant to the procedures for filing complaints.
2. The teacher will assign the student alternate materials of equal merit until a decision is reached, but the use of the challenged materials by the school, class, or school system shall not be restricted until final disposition of the complaint has been made.

(cf. 1220 - Citizens, Advisory Committees)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. [6144](#) - Controversial Issues)

(cf. [6161](#) - Equipment, Books, Materials: Provision/Selection)

Legal Reference: Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853 (1982).

Keyishian v. Board of Regents, 385 U.S. 589, 603 (1967).

President's Council on Educational Policy v. Garland Institute, 401 U.S. 402 (1971), cert. denied 409 U.S. 998 (1976).

Minarcini v. Strongsville City School District, 541 F. 2d 577 (6th Cir. 1976).

Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81).

Regulation Approved: July 7, 1993

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