

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 1312.3/6161.12(a)

RE: Library Material Review & Reconsideration

Approved: Date

The Bloomfield Board of Education understands that, on occasion, a member of the public will wish to lodge a complaint against instructional material used in the classroom or available in the school library/media center. Consideration of requests to reconsider and remove material, displays, or student programs, is limited to individuals with a vested interest. An individual with vested interest may challenge any library and other educational materials, display or student program by initiating a review of such material via the submission of a request for reconsideration form.

It shall be the policy of the Bloomfield Board of Education that the removal, exclusion or censoring of any book shall not occur on the sole basis that a person with a vested interest finds such book offensive. No library and other educational material, display or program shall be removed from library media centers, or programs be canceled, because of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program. Library and other educational materials, displays and student programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and maintenance policy or the display and program policy.

Until a final decision is made by the review committee any library and other educational material being challenged shall remain available in the school library media center according to such material's catalog record and be available for a student to reserve, check out or access.

A school district may consolidate any requests for review and reconsideration of the same challenged library and other educational material. Once a decision has been made by the review committee on any library and other educational material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for review and reconsideration for a period of three years.

The Bloomfield Board of Education will review and update this policy as necessary every five years.

Definitions

"Library and other educational material" means any material belonging to, on loan to or otherwise in the custody of a school library media center, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and digital material, software and other material not required as part of classroom instruction.

"School library staff member" means a school library media specialist, school librarian, any certified or non-certificated staff member whose assignment is in the school library or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media specialist or school librarian.

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Definitions (continued)

"Individual with a vested interest" means any school staff member employed by a local or regional board of education, parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in a school at the time a reconsideration form is filed and any student currently enrolled in a school at the time a reconsideration form is filed.

"Remove" means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. **"Remove"** does not include the process of clearing such collection of any materials that are no longer useful.

Material Review and Reconsideration Procedure

The Board of Education has established the following procedure for addressing complaints regarding the utilization of library and other educational materials:

1. Individuals with a vested interest may initiate the review or reconsideration of any library and other educational materials, display or student program by submitting a request for recommendation form to the principal of the school in which the library and other education material is being challenged.
2. The Principal, or the Principal's designee, shall promptly forward the request for reconsideration to the Superintendent of Schools for the school district.
3. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee, shall appoint a review committee consisting of:
 - a. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee
 - b. the Principal of the school in which the library and other educational material is being challenged, or the Principal's designee
 - c. the Director of curriculum, or a person in an equivalent
 - d. a representative from the local or regional board of education
 - e. at least one grade-level-appropriate teacher familiar with the library material, provided the teacher selected is not the individual who submitted the form
 - f. a parent or guardian of a student age thirteen years or younger enrolled in the school district, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the form
 - g. a parent or guardian of a student age fourteen years or older enrolled in the school district, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the form
 - h. a certified school librarian employed by such board or employed by another board of education in the state.

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In cases where such form is submitted by a student enrolled in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, and when appropriate and at the discretion of the superintendent, a student enrolled in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, may serve on the review committee if such student did not submit the reconsideration form, provided the superintendent consults with the principal of the school involved in such reconsideration request prior to making this determination whether to include such student on the review committee.

4. The review committee shall evaluate the request for reconsideration form by reading the challenged material in its entirety and evaluating the challenged material against the school district's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy.
5. The review committee shall make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material within sixty school days from the date of receiving such request and provide a copy of the committee's decision and report to the individual with a vested interest who submitted the form and to the principal of the school.
6. The individual with a vested interest who submitted the request for reconsideration form may appeal to the review committee's decision to the local or regional board of education for the school district. The Board shall determine whether the reconsideration process was followed and publish the decision on the Internet website of the school district.

General Provisions

Any school library media specialist or school library staff member who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

Legal Reference: Public Act 25-168 An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, and Making Appropriations Therefor, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget.