

## HANDLING INQUIRIES CONCERNING MATERIALS SELECTED OR METHODS OF TEACHING USED

Citizens have the right to know content of materials and methods of implementing the curriculum. Proper respect and prompt resolution will be given to each inquiry. In order to consider the opinions of those persons in the school and the community and avoid the possibility of a biased or prejudicial attitude consistently influencing curricular and/or material selection, the following procedure shall be followed. The object of the procedures outlined herein is that differences of opinion and possible selection errors may be openly examined and resolved.

### Instructions

#### 1. Routing and Inquiry

- a. The most logical place for answering questions or explaining circumstances is at the school level. Citizens are encouraged to direct inquiries to the teacher and the Principal involved. When contacted, principals will provide a copy of the district policy 606, *Instructional Materials*. The principal will inform the teacher(s) in question of the inquiry and direct them to follow the informal procedure.
- b. Any inquiry brought to the attention of the Superintendent, Director of Teaching & Learning, and/or any School Board member should be re-directed to the building level.

#### 2. Step 1: Informal Procedure

- a. The teacher should promptly make contact, preferably person-to-person, with the inquirer in order to ascertain the problem. The teacher or media specialist shall explain the selection rationale for the resource or method of instruction, its intended educational use or the learner outcome, and method of assessment.
- b. If the inquirer seems satisfied, the matter is dropped at this point.
- c. If the inquirer is not satisfied, then proceed to Step 2: Formal Procedure.

#### 3. Step 2: Formal Procedure

- a. A citizen of the school community may register a criticism of material or teaching methods by obtaining, filling out and signing Form 606, "Citizen's Request for Re-evaluation". The form(s) shall be signed and submitted to the Director of Teaching & Learning for official action. Official action shall mean submitting the question to a Re-Evaluation Committee for resolution.
- b. An Ad Hoc committee shall be formed by the Director of Teaching & Learning to deal with all formal requests for re-evaluation.
- c. The Re-evaluation Committee shall consist of:
  - i. Director of Teaching & Learning (Chair) or Designee (Chair)
  - ii. Two teachers - one from each level (primary, intermediate, middle school, high school) depending on the level of the inquiry. (Example, if the inquiry is about an elementary library book, the two teachers would be from the primary and intermediate levels.) The teachers shall be designated by the Committee Chair. The teacher challenged shall not serve on the committee during that particularly inquiry hearing.
  - iii. one media specialist (not the one challenged) designated by the Committee Chair.

- iv. Two students if the inquiry is on the high school level, designated by the Committee Chair.
- v. Four community members designated by the Committee Chair.
- d. The Chair of the committee shall:
  - i. Notify committee members of the objection and set a meeting date within 30 days of the filing of the inquiry.
  - ii. Distribute a copy of the completed Request for Re-Evaluation form to each committee member.
  - iii. Obtain and arrange for reading/viewing/listening to the questioned resource by the committee.
  - iv. Obtain reviews of the questioned resource, or learner objectives relating to the teaching methods, and send them to each committee member prior to the committee meeting.
  - v. Invite the objector, media specialist or teacher and administrator involved to the committee meeting.
  - vi. Invite appropriate persons to provide testimony during the meeting.
  - vii. Write a report of the final resolution of the committee and submit it to the superintendent.
- e. The Committee for Re-Evaluation shall:
  - i. Examine the questioned resource or teaching method in its entirety.
  - ii. Determine professional acceptance of the resource or teaching method by reading critical reviews or periodical articles.
  - iii. Weigh values and faults and form opinions on the resource or teaching method as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
  - iv. Discuss the resource or teaching method in the context of the educational program.
  - v. Hear testimony.
    - 1. The inquirer may appear before the Committee to present his/her case.
    - 2. The teacher involved (or a designate) will appear before the committee to explain objectives of the course and initial reason for use of the teaching method or material. He/she does not argue the case because the teacher is not on trial; the objectives are.
  - vi. Make a decision by public vote. In case of a tie vote, the objection shall be denied.
- f. Resolution of the question shall be handled as follows:
  - i. The Committee Chair shall send the disposition to the inquirer and all appropriate employees including the superintendent.
  - ii. Generally, access to challenged materials shall not be restricted during re-evaluation proceedings, but the Director of Teaching & Learning may limit access under unusual circumstances.
  - iii. The final disposition will rule for a period of four years and be used as the response to any subsequent request for a re-evaluation of the same specific material or topic.

*Independent School District 877  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools*

**CITIZENS REQUEST FOR RE-EVALUATION OF MATERIALS OR TEACHING METHODS**

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Contact information for person submitting this form:

If inquiry is about materials used:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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1. To what do you object and why (please be specific – cite pages, specific instance, etc.):
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do you think would be the result to the student who reads these materials or participates in this class lesson or activity?
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you know if this issue or material is a part of an accepted and approved curriculum?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_ No
  
4. Do you know if opposing points of view are also presented?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_ No
  
5. If inquiry is about materials used, have you read the entire book, the magazine over a range of months, or viewed the entire film?
  
  
  
  
6. Would you consider the material or teaching method to be appropriate for another age group?
  
  
  
  
  
7. Suggested remedy?
  
  
  
  
  
8. What would you suggest in its place?

9. Other comments:

Approved by BHM School Board

July 14, 2008

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