

Students

Administrative Procedure – Responding to Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs

Actor	Action
Parents/Guardians, Employees, and/or Community Members	Submits any feedback or complaints about the District’s curriculum, instructional materials, or programs to the Building Principal, using 6:260-AP, E, <i>Curriculum Objection Form</i> .
Building Principal	Directs any parent/guardian, employee, or community member wishing to submit formal feedback or a complaint regarding curriculum, instructional materials, or programs to complete 6:260-AP, E, <i>Curriculum Objection Form</i>. If the complaint alleges a violation of law or board policy, refers the complaint to the District Complaint Manager for processing under policy 2:260, <i>Uniform Grievance Procedure</i>, and refers the Complaint Manager to the review criteria in this procedure, to the extent they may be relevant to resolution of the complaint. Transmits the <i>Curriculum Objection Form</i> to the Superintendent or designee for further action.
Superintendent or designee (such as the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction)	Informs the Board Attorney of the objection and discusses options for response to the complaint. Contacts the complainant as needed to clarify the nature or scope of the objection and/or the accommodation being requested. Except for complaints involving a parent's religious objection (see below), determines on a case-by-case basis what action, if any, will be taken in response to a complaint about curriculum, considering the following criteria, as applicable: 1. The curriculum, instructional material, or program is aligned with the criteria set forth in Board policy 6:40, <i>Curriculum Development</i>, specifically, regarding: a. The district’s educational philosophy and goals; b. Student needs as identified by research, demographics, and student achievement and other data; c. The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for students to become life-long learners; d. Minimum requirements of State and federal law and regulations for curriculum and graduation requirements; e. The curriculum of non-District schools that feed into or from a District school, provided that the necessary cooperation and information is available; f. Illinois State Learning Standards and any District learning standards; and g. Any required State or federal student testing.

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	2. The law and/or the District already provides a means for parents/guardians to opt their child out; 3. The curriculum, instructional material, or program is optional or supplemental in nature; 4. Reasonable and appropriate alternatives exist; and 5. Individual circumstances that support a need for an accommodation exist. If the complaint is based on a parent's religious objection, determines on a case-by-case basis what action, if any, will be taken in response to the complaint, considering the following factors: 1. The religious beliefs and/or practices identified by the parent and if they are sincerely held. Note: Religious beliefs/practices are generally presumed to be sincere, but if the District has objective reasons to question the religious nature or sincerity of the religious belief/practice, a limited inquiry into this issue may be appropriate. 2. The nature of the material at issue, e.g., is it communicating a normative message that is hostile to a religious viewpoint and designed to pressure students to conform to that viewpoint? 3. The age of the students, e.g., elementary students may be more impressionable and likely to accept moral messages conveyed by instruction without question compared to high school students. 4. The specific context in which the materials is being presented, e.g., is it being presented in a neutral manner or in a manner that is hostile to a religious viewpoint? If factors #1-4 above, considered together, pose a real threat of undermining the religious beliefs and practices that the parent wishes to instill in their child, determine if the District has a compelling interest that would justify the burden on the parent's free exercise right to direct the religious upbringing of their child. Note: In <u>Mahmoud v. Taylor</u>, 145 S.Ct. 2332 (2025), the administrative burden that resulted from permitting opt-outs from instruction was not a compelling interest. It is unsettled whether State law curriculum mandates, graduation requirements, or instruction otherwise required by State learning standards may establish a sufficient compelling interest. Consult the Board Attorney for guidance. In consultation with the Board Attorney, prepares and sends a written response to the person who submitted the <i>Curriculum Objection Form</i>, informing the person of the District's decision. Notes on the <i>Curriculum Objection Form</i> the date on which the response was provided and attaches the response to the form.

APPROVED: