

## Educational Program

Series 600

Policy Title: Materials Selection Procedures

Code No. 605.1A

### I. Statement of Policy

The Board of Education of the Greene County Community School District declares it the policy of the District to provide a wide range of instructional materials on all levels of difficulty, with a wide diversity of appeal and a presentation of different points of view. These materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the District and the objectives of specific courses.

### II. Responsibility for Selection of Materials

- A. The Board of Education is legally responsible for all materials relating to the operation of the Greene County Community School District.
- B. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained and certified staff employed by the District. (The term "instructional materials" includes print, non-print, and electronic materials.)

### III. Criteria for Selection of Materials

- A. The following criteria will be used as they apply:
  - 1. Materials shall support and supplement the educational goals of the Greene County Community School District, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students.
  - 2. Materials shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
  - 3. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
  - 4. Materials shall have aesthetic, literary, or social value.
  - 5. Materials chosen shall be by competent and qualified authors and producers.
  - 6. Materials shall be chosen to foster respect for minority groups, women, and ethnic groups and shall realistically represent our pluralistic society. Materials shall be designed to help students gain an awareness and understanding of the many important contributions made to our civilization by minority groups, women, and ethnic groups.
  - 7. Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.
  - 8. Biased or slanted materials may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives with the understanding that the limitations of these materials will be addressed when used in class.
  - 9. Physical format and appearance of materials shall be suitable for their intended use.
- B. The selection of materials on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

IV. Procedure for Selection

- A. In selecting materials for purchase for the school media center, the school media specialist will evaluate the existing collection and the curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate sources.
- B. Recommendations for purchase will be solicited from faculty and student body.
- C. Gift materials may be accepted with the understanding that the materials shall be judged by the criteria in Section III and disposition of the materials will be made consistent with these criteria.
- D. Selection is an ongoing process which shall include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.
- E. The discarding of library materials may be done all at one time at the end of the school year or it may be done a few books at a time at intervals during the year. In any case, the librarian must make the decision as to what is no longer needed or valuable. Discarded materials may be disposed of in the following ways:
  - 1. Offered to another media center in the school district.
  - 2. Offered to teachers in the district.
  - 3. Offered to students.
  - 4. Donated to the athletic department for the garage sale.
  - 5. Removed to landfill.

V. Reconsideration of Materials

- A. Any resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to instructional materials used in the district's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection and followed the proper procedure and observed the criteria for selection of such material.
  - 1. The school official or staff member receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials shall try to resolve the issue informally.
    - a. The school official or staff member initially receiving a complaint shall explain to the complainant the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material.
    - b. The school official or staff member initially receiving a complaint shall explain to the best of his or her ability the particular place the objected to material occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the complaining party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the material.
  - 2. In the event that the person making an objection to material is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person raising the question should be referred to someone designated by the principal to handle such complaints or to the school media specialist for that attendance center. If, after private counseling, the complainant desires to file a formal complaint, the person to whom the complainant has been referred will assist in filling out a Reconsideration Request Form in full.
  - 3. The individual receiving the initial complaint shall advise the principal of the initial contact no later than the end of the following school day, whether or not the

complainant has apparently been satisfied by the initial contact. A written record of the contact shall be maintained by the principal.

4. The principal shall review the selection and objection rules with the staff at least annually. The staff shall be reminded that the right to object to materials is one granted by policies enacted by the Board of Education and firmly entrenched in law. They shall also be reminded of ethical and practical considerations in attempting to handle resident complaints with courtesy and integrity.

B. Request for Reconsideration

1. Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge instructional materials used in the district's educational program on the basis of appropriateness. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the school and community who are not directly involved in the selection process.
2. Each attendance center and the school district's central office will keep on hand and make available Reconsideration Request Forms. All formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
3. The Reconsideration Request Form shall be signed by the complainant and filed with the Superintendent or someone so designated by the Superintendent.
4. Within five business days of the filing of the form, the Superintendent shall file the material in question with the Reconsideration Committee for re-evaluation. The committee shall recommend disposition to the office of the Superintendent.
5. Generally, access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the material may be removed temporarily by following the provisions of Section (V.B.6.b.) of this rule.
6. The Reconsideration Committee
  - a. The Reconsideration Committee shall be made up of the following:
    1. One school media specialist.
    2. One member of the school administrative staff designated by the Superintendent.
    3. One or more teachers designated by the building principal.
    4. One or more community members appointed by the building principal.
  - b. Special meetings may be called by the Superintendent to consider temporary removal of materials in unusual circumstances. Temporary removal shall require a 3/4 vote of the committee.
  - c. The procedure for the first meeting following receipt of a reconsideration request form may be as follows:
    1. Distribute copies of written request form.
    2. Give complainant or group spokesperson an opportunity to talk about and expand on the request form.
    3. Distribute reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the materials when available.
    4. Distribute copies of challenged material as available.

- d. At a subsequent meeting, interested persons, including the complainant, may have the opportunity to share their views. The committee may request that individuals with special knowledge be present to give information to the committee.
- e. The complainant shall be kept informed by the principal or his/her designee concerning the status of the complaint through the committee reconsideration process. The complainant and known interested parties shall be given appropriate notice of Reconsideration Committee meetings.
- f. At the second or a subsequent meeting, as desired, the committee shall make its decision in open session. The committee's final decision will be, (1) to take no removal action; (2) to remove all or part of the challenged material from the total school environment; or (3) to limit the educational use of the material. The sole criteria for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use. The written decision and its justification shall be forwarded to the Superintendent for appropriate action and to the complainant and the appropriate attendance centers.
- g. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection or use of the material.
- h. Request to reconsider materials which have previously been before the committee must receive approval of a majority of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered. Every Reconsideration Request Form shall be acted upon by the committee.
- i. In the event of a severe overload of challenges, the committee may appoint a subcommittee of members or nonmembers to consolidate challenges and to make recommendations to the full committee. The composition of this subcommittee shall approximate the representation of the full committee.
- j. Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, or challenge of the challenged materials shall be excused from the committee during the deliberation on such materials. The Superintendent may appoint a temporary replacement for the excused committee member, but such replacement shall be of the same general qualifications of that person excused.
- k. If not satisfied with the decision, any person may request that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
- l. Any person dissatisfied with the decision of the Board may appeal to the State Board of Education pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 290.

Date of Adoption:  
January 8, 2014

Legal References (Code of Iowa):

Date Amended:

Related Administrative Rules and Regulations:

Date Reviewed:  
March 13, 2024