

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION

The board has sole discretion to approve instructional materials for the school district. This authority is delegated to licensed employees to determine which instructional materials, other than textbooks, will be utilized by and purchased by the school district.

In reviewing current instructional materials for continued use and in selecting additional instructional materials, licensed employees shall consider the current and future needs of the school district as well as the changes and the trends in education and society. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to report to the board the action taken by licensed employees.

In the case of textbooks, the board shall make the final decision after receiving a recommendation from the superintendent. The criteria stated above for selection of other instructional materials shall apply to the selection of textbooks. The superintendent may develop another means for the selection of textbooks. Textbooks shall be reviewed as needed and at least every seven years.

Education materials given to the school district must meet the criteria established above. The gift must be received in compliance with board policy.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2005).

Cross Reference: 209.1 Ad Hoc Committees  
505 Student Scholastic Achievement  
602 Curriculum Development  
605 Instructional Materials

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

## SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

### I. Responsibility for Selection of Instructional Materials

- A. The Board is responsible for matters relating to the operation of the New Hampton Community School District.
- B. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained and licensed employees of the school system. For the purpose of this rule the term "instructional materials" includes printed and audiovisual materials (not equipment), whether considered text materials or media center materials. The board retains the final authority for the approval of textbooks.
- C. While selection of materials may involve many people including principals, teachers, students, parents, community members and media specialists, the responsibility for coordinating the selection of most instructional materials and making the recommendation for the purchase rests with licensed employees. For the purpose of this rule the term "media specialist" includes librarians, school media specialists or other appropriately licensed persons responsible for the selection of media equipment and materials.
- D. Responsibility for coordinating the selection of text materials for distribution to classes will rest with the licensed employees, principal and superintendent. For the purpose of this rule the term 'text materials' includes textbooks and other printed and nonprinted material provided in multiple copies for use of a total class or major segment of a class.
- E. If the board appoints an ad hoc committee to make recommendations on the selection of instructional materials, the ad hoc committee shall be formed and appointed in compliance with the board policy on Ad Hoc Committees.
  1. The superintendent will inform the committee as to their role and responsibility in the process.
  2. The following statement shall be given to the ad hoc committee members:

*Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to learn and to read and base your decision on these broad principles rather than on defense of individual materials. Freedom of inquiry is vital to education in a democracy.*

*Study thoroughly all materials referred to you and read available reviews. The general acceptance of the materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and local holdings in other schools.*

*Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based on the material as a whole.*

*Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the principal to the complainant at the conclusion of our discussion of the questioned material.*

## SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- II. Material selected for use in libraries and classrooms shall meet the following guidelines:
- A. Religion - Material shall represent the major religions in a factual, unbiased manner. The primary source material of the major religions shall be considered appropriate, but material which advocates rather than informs, or is designed to sway reader judgment regarding religion, shall not be included in the school libraries or classrooms.
  - B. Racism - Material shall present a diversity of race, custom, culture, and belief as a positive aspect of the nation's heritage and give candid treatment to unresolved intercultural problems, including those which involve prejudice, discrimination, and the undesirable consequences of withholding rights, freedom, or respect of an individual.
  - C. Sexism - Material shall reflect sensitivity to the needs, rights, traits and aspirations of men and women without preference or bias.
  - D. Age - Material shall recognize the diverse contributions of various age groups and portray the continuing contributions of maturing members of society.
  - E. Ideology - Material shall present basic primary and factual information on an ideology or philosophy of government which exerts or has exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, over civilization or society, past or present. This material shall not be selected with the intention to sway reader judgment and shall be related to the maturity level of the intended audience.
  - F. Profanity and Sex - Material shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality by the media specialists and licensed staff who will take into consideration their reading of public and community standards of morality.
  - G. Controversial issues materials will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

The selection decision should be made on the basis of whether the material presents an accurate representation of society and culture, whether the circumstances depicted are realistically portrayed, or whether the material has literary or social value when the material is viewed as a whole.

These guidelines shall not be construed in such a manner as to preclude materials which accurately represent the customs, morals, manners, culture, or society of a different time or a different place.

### III. Procedure for Selection

- A. Material purchased for libraries and classrooms shall be recommended for purchase by licensed employees, in consultation with administrative staff, media center staff, students or an ad hoc committee as appointed by the board. The material recommended for purchase shall be approved by the appropriate building administrator.

## SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. The materials selected shall support stated objectives and goals of the school district. Specifically, the goals are:
  - a. To acquire materials and provide service consistent with the demands of the curriculum;
  - b. To develop students' skills and resourcefulness in the use of libraries and learning resources;
  - c. To effectively guide and counsel students in the selection and use of materials and libraries;
  - d. To foster in students a wide range of significant interests;
  - e. To provide opportunities for aesthetic experiences and development of an appreciation of the fine arts;
  - f. To provide materials to motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behaviors and to comprehend their own duties and responsibilities as citizens in a pluralistic democracy;
  - g. To encourage life-long education through the use of the library; and,
  - h. To work cooperatively and constructively with the instructional and administrative staff in the school.
  
2. Materials selected shall be consistent with stated principles of selection. These principles are:
  - a. To select material, within established standards, which will meet the goals and objectives of the school district;
  - b. To consider the educational characteristics of the community in the selection of materials within a given category;
  - c. To present the sexual, racial, religious and ethnic groups in the community by:
    - (1) Portraying people, both men and women, adults and children, whatever their ethnic, religious or social class identity, as human and recognizable, displaying a familiar range of emotions, both negative and positive.
    - (2) Placing no constraints on individual aspirations and opportunity.
    - (3) Giving comprehensive, accurate, and balanced representation to minority groups and women - in art and science, history and literature, and in all other fields of life and culture.
    - (4) Providing abundant recognition of minority groups and women by showing them frequently in positions of leadership and authority.
  - d. To intelligently, quickly, and effectively anticipate and meet needs through awareness of subjects of local, national and international interest and significance; and,

## SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- e. To strive for impartiality in the selection process.
3. The materials selected shall meet stated selection criteria. These criteria are:
- a. Authority-Author's qualifications - education, experience, and previously published works;
  - b. Reliability:
    - (1) Accuracy-meaningful organization and emphasis on content, meets the material's goals and objectives, and presents authoritative and realistic factual material.
    - (2) Current-presentation of content which is consistent with the finding of recent and authoritative research.
  - c. Treatment of subject-shows an objective reflection for the multi-ethnic character and cultural diversity of society.
  - d. Language:
    - (1) Vocabulary:
      - a. Does not indicate bias by the use of words which may result in negative value judgments about groups of people;
      - b. Does not use "man" or similar limiting word usage in generalization or ambiguities which may cause women to feel excluded or dehumanized.
    - (2) Compatible to the reading level of the student for whom it is intended.
  - e. Format:
    - (1) Book
      - a. Adequate and accurate index;
      - b. Paper of good quality and color;
      - c. Print adequate and well spaced;
      - d. Adequate margins;
      - e. Firmly bound; and,
      - f. Cost.
    - (2) Nonbook
      - a. Flexibility, adaptability;
      - b. Curricular orientation of significant interest to students;
      - c. Appropriate for audience;
      - d. Accurate authoritative presentation;
      - e. Good production qualities (fidelity, aesthetically adequate);
      - f. Durability; and,
      - g. Cost.
    - (3) Illustrations of book and nonbook materials should:
      - a. Depict instances of fully integrated grouping and settings to indicate equal status and nonsegregated social relationships.
      - b. Make clearly apparent the identity of minorities;
      - c. Contain pertinent and effective illustrations;
    - (4) Flexible to enable the teacher to use parts at a time and not follow a comprehensive instructional program on a rigid frame of reference.

- f. Special Features:
  - (1) Bibliographies.
  - (2) Glossary.
  - (3) Current charts, maps, etc.
  - (4) Visual aids.
  - (5) Index.
  - (6) Special activities to stimulate and challenge students.
  - (7) Provide a variety of learning skills.
  
- g. Potential use:
  - (1) Will it meet the requirement of reference work?
  - (2) Will it help students with personal problems and adjustments?
  - (3) Will it serve as a source of information for teachers and librarians?
  - (4) Does it offer an understanding of cultures other than the student's own and is it free of racial, religious, age, disability, ethnic, and sexual stereotypes?
  - (5) Will it expand students' sphere of understanding and help them to understand the ideas and beliefs of others?
  - (6) Will it help students and teachers keep abreast of and understand current events?
  - (7) Will it foster and develop hobbies and special interest?
  - (8) Will it help develop aesthetic tastes and appreciation?
  - (9) Will it serve the needs of students with special problems?
  - (10) Does it inspire learning?
  - (11) Is it relevant to the subject?
  - (12) Will it stimulate a student's interest?
  
- 4. Gifts of library or instructional materials may be accepted if the gift meets existing criteria for library and instructional materials. The acceptance and placement of such gifts shall be within the discretion of the board.
  
- 5. In order to provide a current, highly usable collection of materials, media specialists shall provide for constant and continuing renewal of the collection, not only the addition of up-to-date materials, but by the judicious elimination of materials which no longer meet school district needs or find use. The process of weeding instructional materials will be done according to established and accepted standards for determining the relevance and value of materials in a given context.

Legal Reference: Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Pub. L. No. 103-227, 108 Stat. 125 (1994).  
Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2005).

Cross Reference: 602 Curriculum Development  
605 Instructional Materials  
901.1 Public Examination of School District Records

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

Code No. 605.2

### INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS INSPECTION

Parents and other members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by the students. All instructional materials, including teacher's manuals, films, tapes or other supplementary material which will be used in

connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any federally funded programs must be available for inspection by parents.

The instructional materials must be viewed on school district premises. Copies may be obtained according to board policy.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding the inspection of instructional materials.

Legal Reference:       Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Pub. L. No. 103-227, 108 Stat. 125 (1994).  
Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2005).

Cross Reference:       602     Curriculum Development  
                          605     Instructional Materials  
                          901.1   Public Examination of School District Records

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

OBJECTION TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Members of the school district community may object to the instructional materials utilized in the school district and ask for their use to be reconsidered.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principals, to develop administrative regulations for reconsideration of instructional materials.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 279.8; 280.3, .14; 301 (2005).

Cross Reference: 215 Public Participation in Board Meetings  
402.5 Public Complaints About Employees  
602 Curriculum Development  
605 Instructional Materials

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised March 2010



## INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE

The policy of this school district related to selection of learning materials states that any member of the school district community may formally challenge instructional materials used in the district's education program. This policy allows those persons in the school and the community who are not directly involved in the selection of materials to make their own opinions known. The task of the reconsideration committee is to provide an open forum for discussion of challenged materials and to make an informed recommendation on the challenge. The meetings of the committee may be subject to the open meetings law.

The most critical component of the reconsideration process is the establishment and maintenance of the committee's credibility in the community. For this purpose, the committee is composed of community members. The community should not, therefore, infer that the Committee is biased or is obligated to uphold prior professional decisions. For this same reason, a community member will be selected to chair the committee.

The reconsideration process, the task of this committee, is just one part of the selection continuum. Material is purchased to meet a need. It is reviewed and examined, if possible, prior to purchase. It is periodically re-evaluated through updating, discarding, or re-examination. The committee must be ready to acknowledge that an error in selection may have been made despite this process. Librarians and school employees regularly read great numbers of reviews in the selection process, and occasional errors are possible.

In reconsidering challenged materials, the role of the committee, and particularly the chairperson, is to produce a climate for disagreement. However, the committee should begin by finding items of agreement, keeping in mind that the larger the group participating, the greater the amount of information available and, therefore, the greater the number of possible approaches to the problem.

If the complainant chooses, the complainant may make an oral presentation to the committee to expand and elaborate on the complaint. The committee will listen to the Complainant, to those with special knowledge, and any other interested persons. In these discussions, the committee should be aware of relevant social pressures which are affecting the situation. Individuals who may try to dominate or impose a decision must not be allowed to do so. Minority viewpoints expressed by groups or individuals must be heard, and observers must be made to feel welcome. It is important that the committee create a calm, nonvolatile environment in which to deal with a potentially volatile situation. To this end, the complainant will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint.

The committee will listen to the views of all interested persons before making recommendations. In deliberating its recommendation, the committee should remember that the school system must be responsive to the needs, tastes, and opinions of the community it serves. Therefore, the committee must distinguish between broad community sentiment and attempts to impose personal standards. The deliberations should concentrate on the appropriateness of the material. The question to be answered by the committee is, "Is the material appropriate for its designated audience at this time?"

The committee's final recommendation will be (1) to remove the challenged material from the total school environment, (2) to take no removal action, or (3) to agree on a limitation of the educational use of the materials.

The committee chairperson will instruct the secretary to convey the committee's recommendation to the office of the superintendent. The recommendation should detail the rationale on which it was based. A letter will be sent to the complainant outlining the outcome.

Approved October 2005

Reviewed March 2010

Revised March 2010

*RECONSIDERATION REQUEST FORM*

Request for re-evaluation of printed or audiovisual material to be submitted to the superintendent.

REVIEW INITIATED BY:

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School(s) in which item is used \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to school (parent, student, citizen, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

BOOK OR OTHER PRINTED MATERIAL IF APPLICABLE:

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Hardcover \_\_\_\_\_ Paperback \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Publication \_\_\_\_\_

AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL IF APPLICABLE:

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Producer (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of material (filmstrip, motion picture, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON MAKING THE REQUEST REPRESENTS: *(circle one)*

Self

Group or Organization

Name of group \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Group \_\_\_\_\_

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. What brought this item to your attention?

---

---

2. To what in the item do you object? (please be specific; cite pages, or frames, etc.)

---

---

3. In your opinion, what harmful effects upon students might result from use of this item?

---

---

4. Do you perceive any instructional value in the use of this item?

---

---

5. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

---

---

6. Should the opinion of any additional experts in the field be considered?

\_\_\_\_\_ yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ no

If yes, please list specific suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

---

7. To replace this item, do you recommend other material which you consider to be of equal or superior quality for the purpose intended?

---

---

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

8. Do you wish to make an oral presentation to the Review Committee?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes (a) Please call the office of the Superintendent

(b) Please be prepared at this time to indicate the approximate length of time your presentation will require.

\_\_\_\_\_ Minutes.

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised March 2010

SAMPLE LETTER TO INDIVIDUAL CHALLENGING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Dear:

We recognize your concern about the use of \_\_\_\_\_ in our school district. The school district has developed procedures for selection of instructional materials but realizes that not everyone will agree with every selection made.

To help you understand the selection process, we are sending copies of the school district's:

1. Instructional goals and objectives,
2. Instructional Materials Selection policy statement, and
3. Procedure for reconsideration of instructional materials.

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the Reconsideration Request Form and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request. If I have not heard from you within one week, we will assume you no longer wish to file a formal complaint.

Sincerely,

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised March 2010

## RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REGULATION

- A. A member of the school district community may raise an objection to instructional materials used in the school district's education 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 selecting such material.
1. The school official or employee receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials will try to resolve the issue informally. The materials will remain in use pending the outcome of the reconsideration procedure.
    - a. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the board's selection procedure, criteria to be met by the instructional materials, and qualifications of those persons selecting the material.
    - b. The school official or employee initially receiving a complaint will explain to the individual the role of the objected material in the education program, its intended educational purpose, and additional information regarding its use. In the alternative, the employee may refer the individual to the media specialist who can identify and explain the use of the material.
  2. The employee receiving the initial complaint will advise the building principal of the initial contact no later than the end of the school day following the discussion with the individual, whether or not the individual has been satisfied by the initial contact. A written record of the contact is maintained by the principal in charge of the attendance center. Each building principal shall inform employees of their obligation to report complaints.
  3. In the event the individual making an objection to instructional materials is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the individual is referred to the principal or to the media specialist of the attendance center. If, after consultation with the principal or media specialist, the individual desires to file a formal complaint, the principal or media specialist will assist in filling out a Reconsideration Request Form in full and filing it with the superintendent.
- B. Request for Reconsideration
1. A member of the school district community may formally challenge instructional materials on the basis of appropriateness used in the school district's education program. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the school district and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.
  2. Each attendance center and the school district's central administrative office will keep on hand and make available Reconsideration Request Forms. Formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
  3. The individual will state the specific reason the instructional material is being challenged. The Reconsideration Request Form is signed by the individual and filed with the superintendent.
  4. The superintendent will promptly file the objection with the reconsideration committee for re-evaluation.

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REGULATION

5. Generally, access to challenged instructional material will not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the instructional material may be removed temporarily by following the provisions of Section B.6.d. of this rule.
6. The Reconsideration Committee
  - a. The reconsideration committee is made up of eight members.
    - (1) One licensed employee designated annually by the superintendent.
    - (2) One media specialist designated annually by the superintendent.
    - (3) One member of the administrative team designated annually by the superintendent.
    - (4) Three members of the community appointed annually by the board.
    - (5) Two high school students, selected annually by the high school principal.
  - b. The committee will annually select their chairperson and secretary.
  - c. The committee will meet at the request of the superintendent.
  - d. Special meetings may be called by the board to consider temporary removal of materials in unusual circumstances. A recommendation for temporary removal will require a two-thirds vote of the committee.
  - e. Notice of committee meetings is made public through appropriate publications and other communications methods.
  - f. The committee will receive the completed Reconsideration Request Form from the superintendent.
  - g. The committee will determine its agenda for the first meeting which may include the following:
    - (1) Distribution of copies of the completed Reconsideration Request Form.
    - (2) An opportunity for the individual or a group spokesperson to talk about or expand on the Reconsideration Request Form.
    - (3) Distribution of reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the challenged instructional material if available.
    - (4) Distribution of copies of the challenged instructional material as available.
  - h. The committee may review the selection process for the challenged instructional material and may, to its satisfaction, determine that the challenge is without merit and dismiss the challenge. The committee will notify the individual and the superintendent of its action.
  - i. At a subsequent meeting, if held, interested persons, including the individual filing the challenge, 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.
  - j. The individual filing the challenge is kept informed by the reconsideration committee secretary on the status of the Reconsideration Request Form throughout the reconsideration process. The individual filing the challenge and known interested parties is given appropriate notice of meetings.

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REGULATION

- k. At the second or a subsequent meeting the committee will make its final recommendation. The committee's final recommendation may be to take no removal action, to remove the challenged material from the school environment, or to limit the educational use of the challenged material. The sole criterion for the final recommendation is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use. The written final recommendation and its justification are forwarded to the board, the individual and the appropriate attendance centers. The superintendent may also make a recommendation but if so, it should be independent from the committee's.

Following the board's decision with respect to the committee's recommendation, the individual or the chairperson of the reconsideration committee may appeal the decision to the board for review. Such appeal must be presented to the superintendent in writing within five days following the announcement of the superintendent's decision. The board will promptly determine whether to hear the appeal.

- l. A recommendation to sustain a challenge will not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the individuals involved in the original selection or use of the material.
- m. Requests to reconsider materials which have previously been reconsidered by the committee must receive approval of two-thirds of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered. Completed and filed Reconsideration Request Forms are acted upon by the committee.
- n. If necessary or appropriate in the judgment of the committee, 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 will approximate the representation of the full committee.
- o. Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, or challenger of the challenged material are excused from the committee during the deliberation of the challenged instructional materials. The superintendent may appoint a temporary replacement for the excused committee member, but the replacement is of the same general qualifications as the member excused.
- p. Persons dissatisfied with the decision of the board may appeal to the Iowa Board of Education pursuant to state law.

Approved April 2010

Reviewed March 2010

Revised March 2010