West Ada School District, Meridian

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Series 600

Policy Title     Reconsideration of Supplemental Learning and
Library Resources  Code No. 602.22

Guiding Principles
Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge a supplemental learning resource 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 schools and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.

A. Any resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to a supplemental learning resource used in a school’s educational program, despite the fact that the individuals selecting such resources were duly qualified to make the selection, followed the proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selecting supplemental learning resources.

B. The principal or designee should review the selection and objection rules with the teaching staff annually. The staff should be reminded that the right to object to a supplemental learning resource is one granted by policies enacted by the Board of Trustees.

C. A parent has the right to request an alternative supplemental learning resource for his/her own child. No parent has the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than his or her own children.

D. When supplemental learning resources are challenged, freedom to read/listen/view must be considered.

E. Each challenged resource shall be considered on its own individual merits or flaws.

F. Access to the challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.

G. The final decision should be based on the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.

H. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility by the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

Request for Informal Reconsideration
The school receiving a complaint regarding a supplemental learning resource shall first try to resolve the issue informally.

A. In an informal meeting, the principal and other appropriate staff shall explain to the complainant the district’s/school’s selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.

B. The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned supplemental resource occupies in the education program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use.

C. If an agreement is reached about the scope of the resource’s use in that building, then the parent(s) and building need to clearly state, in writing, the terms of the agreement.

D. If an agreement is not reached, and the complainant wishes to file a formal challenge, then procedures for formal reconsideration should be followed.
Request for Formal Reconsideration

If a complainant wishes to file a formal challenge, a dated cover letter requesting a response from the complainant within two weeks, a copy of the district Selection of Learning Resources policy and a Request for Reconsideration of Supplemental Learning Resources form shall be handed or mailed to the party concerned by the principal. All formal objections to a supplemental learning resource must be made on these forms, signed by the complainant and filed with the building principal or someone so designated by the principal.

The Reconsideration Committee

Within five days of the receipt of a request for formal reconsideration of a supplemental learning resource, the superintendent’s designee shall:

A. Appoint a reconsideration committee. At the secondary level the committee shall include the following membership: the building principal or other administrative designee, the teacher(s) and department head(s) directly involved with the learning resource, the school counselor (as needed), a district curriculum coordinator, the building media generalist and 5 parents. At the elementary level the committee shall include the following membership: the building principal or other administrative designee, the teacher(s) directly involved with the learning resource, the school counselor (as needed), a district curriculum coordinator, the district library coordinator and 5 parents. Parent members of the committees will be selected from a pre-determined list (comprised of one parent from each zone, designated by the respective board member).

B. Arrange for a reconsideration committee meeting within 10 working days after the complaint is received, giving the committee members an appropriate amount of time to read or examine the work in its entirety before the meeting. The reconsideration committee may consult additional district staff and/or community persons or parents with related professional knowledge.

C. The reconsideration committee shall review the challenged supplemental resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the district’s Selection of Learning Resources policy. At the first committee meeting, the committee shall:

1. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resource if available;
2. Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context;
3. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program;
4. If the committee feels that no more discussion or information is needed, and the complainant has not requested permission to make a presentation to the committee, the committee may come to a decision at the first meeting.

D. At a subsequent meeting, the complainant and other interested persons may be given the opportunity to share their views. The final decision will be made at that meeting.

E. The decision will be made within the scope of the complaint and will include one of the following:

1. The supplemental resource is compatible with the philosophy and criteria of this policy and should not be restricted or removed.
2. The supplemental resource is compatible with the philosophy and criteria of this policy, but should be restricted to conditions specified by the committee.
3. The supplemental resource is not compatible with the philosophy and criteria of this policy and should be removed.

Resolution

A. The reconsideration committee shall prepare a written report.

B. The written report shall be retained by the school principal, with copies forwarded to the Directors. A minority report also may be filed. Written reports, including minutes, individual committee member notes, and/or comments, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by trustees and appropriate officials only.

C. The principal will notify the complainant of the decision. A summary of the written report shall be provided to the complainant.

D. The decision of the reconsideration committee is binding for the individual school.

E. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this policy, the complainant shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee to the Board of Trustees as the final review panel. A written appeal to the Board of Trustees must be filed within five school days of the discussion with the complainant. Within five school days after the receipt of the appeal, the District shall notify the complainant of the date of the meeting at which the appeal will be addressed.

F. Materials which have undergone a challenge may not be re-challenged in the building where the reconsideration occurred until one calendar year after the recommendation of the committee.

Date of Adoption: 09/08/09

Legal Reference: Code of Idaho