

## Procedures for Handling Challenged Instructional Materials

- Step 1 Any adult resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to materials used in the educational program. The objection is made to the classroom teacher first. The teacher receiving the complaint shall report the matter to his/her principal. Every effort should be made to resolve the issue informally at the school or building level. The material(s) in question will remain in use pending administrative review and resolution of the objection. This process may stop at any time with the consent of all parties involved at that particular step.
- Step 2 If the objection is not resolved at the classroom level, the principal shall apprise the complainant of the district's selection policy, criteria for selection, and the qualifications of those persons selecting the material. In addition, the complainant will be informed of the reason and purpose for the selection, and the judgment of other outside professionals, such as reviewers, regarding the material. Appropriate district-level personnel should be consulted for their expertise which may contribute to a resolution of the issue.
- Step 3 If the informal building-level process has been unsuccessful, the complainant may formally challenge the use of specific materials in the educational program. All formal objections to educational materials must be made in writing on the "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material" form. Each school building and the central office will keep on hand sufficient reconsideration request forms. The reconsideration request form must be signed by the complainant and presented to the principal of the school involved in the reconsideration issue. The principal shall acknowledge the complainant in writing (see attached sample letter).
- Step 4 Within two weeks of receipt of the formal complaint, the principal shall call together an ad hoc materials Review Committee, appointed by the principal, and consisting of the principal, the curriculum director, the district librarian/media director, representatives from among the classroom teachers, one or more parents, and, if appropriate, one or more students.
- Step 5 After receiving the challenged materials, the review committee:
- a. Reads, views, or listens to the material in its entirety, and completes appropriate checklist individually;
  - b. Checks general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended lists;
  - c. Determines the extent to which the material supports the curriculum;
  - d. Completes a composite "Checklist for Review Committee for Challenged Instructional Material," judging the material for its strength and value as a whole and not in part. If a minority opinion exists, that too, should be stated;

- e. Reviews the “Citizen’s Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material” submitted by the complainant;
- f. The complainant may make an oral presentation to the review committee.

Step 6 The principal shall present in a timely manner written recommendation of the Review Committee to the superintendent, who will review the materials and the recommendation, and present them to the school board.

The principal shall notify the complainant of the completion of the review process and the recommendation of the committee.

Step 7 Retain or withdraw the challenged materials as mandated by the recommendation of the superintendent and decision of the school board upon consideration of the recommendation of the Review Committee for Challenged Instructional Materials.

**Baker School District 5J**  
**CHALLENGED NONFICTION AND/OR AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL**

**Instructions to the review committee for challenged instructional materials:**

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. Discuss the challenged item with the complainant and/or instructor when appropriate.

Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the principal to the complainant and the Superintendent at the conclusion of the Review Committee discussion of the questioned material. If the complainant is not satisfied, the principal will present your report to the Superintendent and the School Board.

**Nonfiction and/or Audiovisual Checklist**

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

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Purpose

a. What is the overall purpose for this material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Is the purpose accomplished:  Yes  No

2. Authenticity

a. Is the author competent and qualified in the field?  Yes  No

b. What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Is the material up to date?  Yes  No

d. Are information sources well documented?  Yes  No

e. Are translations and retellings faithful to the original?  Yes  No

3. Appropriateness

- a. Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of District 5-J?  Yes  No
- b. Is it appropriate to the level of instruction intended?  Yes  No
- c. Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels?  Yes  No
- d. Does the material conform to community values and standards?  Yes  No

If no, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Content

- a. Is the content of this material well presented by providing adequate scope, range, depth and continuity?  Yes  No
- b. Does this material present information not otherwise available?  Yes  No
- c. Does this material provide new insights and/or give direction to its subject?  Yes  No

5. Reviews

- a. Source of review \_\_\_\_\_  
 Favorably reviewed  Unfavorably reviewed
- b. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids?  Yes  No  
If the answer is yes, please list titles of selection aids.

**Additional Comments:**

**Baker School District 5J**  
**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR**  
**CHALLENGED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

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. Discuss the challenged item with the complainant and/or instructor when appropriate.

Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the principal to the complainant and the Superintendent at the conclusion of the Review Committee discussion of the questioned material. If the complainant is not satisfied, the principal will present your report to the Superintendent and the School Board.

**Checklist for Fiction or Other Literary Forms**

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

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Purpose

a. What is the purpose, theme or message of the material? How well does the author/producer/composer accomplish this purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

b. If the story is fantasy, is it the type that has imaginative appeal and is suitable for students of the age of instruction?  Yes  No

c. Will the reading and/or viewing and/or listening to the materials result in more compassionate understanding of human beings?  Yes  No

d. Does it offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements and problems of a pluralistic society?  Yes  No

e. Are any questionable elements of the story/work an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message?  Yes  No

f. May the story/work potentially have a negative/damaging effect on students? (Post traumatic stress syndrome, etc.?)  Yes  No

(If yes, please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

g. Does the purpose of the story/work outweigh any possible negative effect on the students?  Yes  No

2. Content

- a. Does the story/work give a realistic picture of life as it was/is at the time of the setting?  
 Yes    No
- b. Does the story/work avoid an oversimplified view of life, one which leaves the 'reader with the general feeling that life is sweet and rosy or ugly and meaningless?    Yes    No
- c. When factual information is part of the story/work, is it presented accurately?    Yes    No
- d. Is prejudicial appeal readily identifiable by the reader?    Yes    No
- e. Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of the students in question?  
 Yes    No
- f. Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live?    Yes    No
- g. Does the material offend any group or gender by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters?    Yes    No  
(If yes, please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Is there preoccupation with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate for the students at the intended instructional level?  
 Yes    No  
(If yes, please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- i. If there is use of offensive language, is it appropriate to the purpose of the text for students at the intended instructional level?    Yes    No
- j. Is material well written or produced?    Yes    No
- k. Does the story enhance understanding of human behavior without stressing differences of class, race, color, sex, education, religion, or philosophy in any adverse way?    Yes    No
- l. Does the material make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas?  
 Yes    No
- m. Are the illustrations (if present) appropriate and in good taste?    Yes    No
- n. Are the illustrations (if present) realistic in relation to the story/work?

**Additional Comments:**

**Baker School District 5J**  
**RECOMMENDATION BY REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR**  
**CHALLENGED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

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

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

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

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

Majority opinion:

Minority opinion:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of Review Committee members:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Baker School District 5J**  
**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION**

Reconsideration Request Form for Re-Evaluation of Instructional Material  
(Submit to principal)

**Book or other printed material, if applicable**

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Hardcover \_\_\_\_\_ Paperback \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Date of pub. \_\_\_\_\_

Audiovisual material, if applicable:

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

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

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Person making the request represents

Self \_\_\_\_\_ (Print name)

Group or organization

Name of Group \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you been able to discuss the work with the teacher or librarian who ordered it or used it?  Yes  No

2. To what in the item do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages, 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

Please list suggestions if any: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What would you like the school to do about this material?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. In place of this item would you care to recommend other material which you consider to be of equal or superior quality for the purpose intended? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you wish to make an oral presentation to the Review Committee?  Yes  No  
If yes, please call the principal's office.
10. **Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Baker School District 5J**  
**SAMPLE LETTER TO COMPLAINANT FROM PRINCIPAL**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

We appreciate your concern over the use of in our school. School District 5-J has developed procedures for selecting 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:

1. Course goals and objectives;
2. State content standards;
3. Materials Selection Policy Statement;
4. Procedure for handling requests for reconsideration;
5. Supplementary instructional materials in question, as appropriate.

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the “Reconsideration Request Form for Re-Evaluation of Instructional Material” you were given and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request.

If I have not heard from you within two weeks, I will assume you no longer wish to file a formal complaint.

Sincerely,

(Principal)