

SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Challenged Materials

The Coffee County Board of Education supports the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* as well as in the *Students' Right to Read* of the National Council of Teachers of English. The intellectual freedom expressed in these documents is based on the principles of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. However, the Board recognizes the right of any citizen in the school community to request reconsideration of an item included in its collection. Requests for reconsideration must be made in writing, addressed at the school level, and acted on by the school library media center committee. Established procedures shall be followed at the school level before a system-level appeal may be requested. Final consideration to withdraw or retain an item rests with the Superintendent and the Board.

In the event materials are challenged, the following procedures will be followed:

- Any member of the school community (administrators, faculty, staff, parents, or students) may raise objection to instructional materials used in the educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection, followed proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selection.
- Persons requesting reconsideration of any material shall complete the "Request for Challenged Materials" form in its entirety.
- Each library media center in the Coffee County School System shall keep on hand and make available the "Request for Challenged Materials" form. All formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
- The school official or staff member receiving a complaint being raised shall explain the selection process utilized and the appeal procedures for challenged materials. They shall refrain from voicing personal opinion.
- Written documentation of this contract should be filed with the school principal.
- The material in question shall remain in use until the reconsideration process is completed.
- In the event the person making an objection to material is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person should be referred to the principal who shall explain the selection and reconsideration process and refrain from expressing personal opinion.
- If, after consultation, the complainant desires to file a formal complaint, a copy of the "Request for Challenged Materials" form should be given to the complainant by the principal.
- The "Request for Challenged Materials" form shall be completed and signed by the complainant and filed with the principal and a copy forwarded to the appropriate system personnel.

- Any action taken related to challenged materials must be taken by the appropriate library media committee and not by an individual.
- The library media committee shall consist of the library media specialist, classroom teachers, school administrator(s), and one or more parents.
- A meeting will be scheduled and all committee members and the complainant notified. The complainant shall be notified in writing and invited to attend and to present the "Request for Challenged Materials" form.
- Each committee member shall read, view, or listen to the material in question in its entirety. In addition, each member will read professional evaluations available pertaining to the material. The library media specialist will complete necessary professional evaluations of the material in question.
- The deliberation and balloting of the library media committee shall be in private. The library media committee will complete the appropriate "Checklist for Challenged Materials" forms judging the material for its strength and value as a whole and not in part.
- The library media committee shall meet to hear the concerns expressed by the complainant; discuss the materials relative to values and faults, appropriateness to curriculum, etc.; render a majority decision, in a meeting with a quorum present, deciding to: (1) take no removal action, (2) remove the challenged material, (3) limit the educational use of the challenged material, or (4) place the material at another grade level.
- Within five days of the library media committee decision, the chairperson shall notify the complainant in writing of the decision reached and advise of the right to appeal.
- Appeals to the library media committee's decision must be made within ten working days after formal notification of the decision. A written request must be addressed to the superintendent, who shall bring the issue before the Board of Education.
- The staff shall be reminded that the right to object to material is one firmly entrenched in the law and granted by the school. They shall also be reminded of ethical and practical considerations in attempting to handle complaints with courtesy and integrity.

Copyrights/Fair Use

The Board shall encourage and support users to respect the rights of copyright owners regardless of media types. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the user should follow the expressed requirements. If the user is unsure whether or not they can use a work, they should request permission from the copyright owner.

Staff members who violate the provisions of this policy shall be considered to have committed misconduct in office and such misconduct shall be grounds for discipline action. Students who violate the provisions of this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with the student disciplinary code.

The Board of Education hereby directs the superintendent to ensure that all staff members and students are advised of this policy at least annually.

Library Bill of Rights

“Intellectual freedom accords to all library users the right to seek and receive information on all subjects, from all points of view without restriction and without having the subject of one’s interest examined or scrutinized by others.”

American Library Association (2006) *Intellectual Freedom Manual* states that Intellectual freedom is prerequisite to effective and responsible citizenship in a democracy and is one of the core values of the library profession. The American Library Association’s (ALA) *Library Bill of Rights* (LBOR) serves as the library profession’s interpretation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Coffee County School System affirms and supports these statements on intellectual freedom.

A library media program is founded on a commitment to the right of intellectual freedom. By providing access to information and ideas essential for 21st Century learners, a library media specialist empowers learners to become critical thinkers, competent problem solvers, and lifelong learners who contribute productively and ethically to a pluralistic society. A library media specialist is a leader in meeting a school’s responsibility to provide resources on all points of view on all questions and issues and to make these ideas and opinions available to anyone who needs or wants them, regardless of age, background, or views.