

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Reg. No. 500-39
Subject: RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ALREADY IN USE	Date of Issue: 9/1/93
Preparing Office: Office of the Superintendent	Amended: 7/1/07

I. Policy 501

II. Procedures

A. Definitions – For the purpose of this regulation, the following definitions are provided:

- Associate Superintendent - Associate Superintendent with responsibility for curriculum
- Board - Board of Education of Frederick County
- Complainant - Citizen of Frederick County
- Essential Curriculum - Written curriculum prepared by Frederick County Public Schools staff and approved by the board. Essential curriculum is reviewed by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee and approved by the board.
- Essential Curriculum Guides - Prepared by Frederick County Public Schools staff to implement the adopted essential curriculum and may include activities, resources, etc.
- In Principle - Means that a complaint falls into a category about which the superintendent or the board has taken a formal stand, e.g., negativism.
- Materials Already In Use - Includes library media materials and all materials used for instructional purposes or planning, except for textbooks under consideration.
- Superintendent - Superintendent of Schools - Frederick County Public Schools
- Teaching Materials - Includes items not contained in the definition of textbooks. They are a secondary source of information used by teachers to enrich and re-teach the essential curriculum. Teaching materials are used at the discretion of the individual teacher, and the decision is one of instructional strategy. Teaching materials include, but are not limited to, teaching manuals, textbook guides, resource material, anthologies, big books, multimedia, magazine articles, and pictures. Most teaching materials are not placed in the hands of students, e.g., teaching manuals and textbook guides.
- Textbooks - Narrowly construed to mean the primary source for teaching the essential curriculum. They typically, are placed in the hands of every student. Student workbooks are included in this definition.

B. Reconsideration of Instructional Materials Already in Use

1. Upon receipt of a complaint, the teacher, principal, or curriculum specialist will meet with the complainant(s), individually or as a group, and attempt to answer any questions and resolve differences.
2. If the complainant(s) maintains opposition to use of the material, the curriculum specialist will provide the complainant(s) with a "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material." Contested material will remain in use during the reconsideration process. Parents may request that alternative material be provided to their child.
3. Upon receipt of the reconsideration form(s), staff will review the form(s) to determine whether the issues were covered "in principle" by previous decisions.
4. Upon receipt of staff's recommendation and the "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material," the associate superintendent with responsibility for curriculum will study the request to determine if the matter has been covered "in principle" by a previous decision. If it is determined that the matter has not been covered "in principle," the associate superintendent will appoint a reconsideration committee or, if there are fewer than five (5) complaints, may refer it directly to the superintendent as described in paragraph 5. If it is determined that the matter has been covered "in principle," the associate superintendent will typically not appoint a reconsideration committee and refer the matter directly to the superintendent with a recommendation.
5. If the associate superintendent has recommended that a reconsideration committee not be formed, the superintendent will review the associate superintendent's recommendation and the request(s) for reconsideration. The superintendent will either (1) request the associate superintendent to convene a reconsideration committee or (2) render a decision and notify all individuals who filed a "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material."

C. The Committee and Its Deliberations

1. Composition of the Committee
 - a. Reconsideration committees will be appointed as needed by the appropriate associate superintendent, who will request staff to convene a committee within twenty-one (21) working days.
 - b. Each committee will be composed of eleven (11) members that will include:
 - (1) Four (4) staff members
 - One (1) curriculum specialist
 - One (1) administrator
 - Two (2) teachers
 - (2) Five (5) community representatives
 - Four (4) parents of students enrolled in Frederick County public schools
 - One (1) citizen (who may also be a parent) knowledgeable in the subject area involved
 - (3) Two (2) high school students (grades 9-12)

- c. Alternate members will be selected by the appropriate associate superintendent. In the event a member of a committee cannot serve for a particular review, an alternate will be selected for that review so that the representative balance of the group will be maintained.
 - d. The committee shall serve until the specific challenge has been resolved. If there are additional challenges to the material or challenges to supplementary, similar, or related materials, the original committee may be reconvened.
2. Deliberations
- a. The committee will meet and receive testimony from the complainant(s) and staff concerning the contested material. Additionally, the committee may, at its discretion, receive oral or written testimony from proponents of the material. The committee will establish procedures governing the hearing and the deliberations.
 - b. The committee will issue a report within fourteen (14) working days. The report will be written in the following format:
 - (1) Response to specific complaint(s)
 - (2) Evaluation of contested material(s)
 - (a) Relationship to curriculum and to board policy
 - (b) Relationship to established criteria for selection of instructional materials
 - (3) Signatures of committee members affixed to majority and minority opinions
 - (4) The committee's report will be given to the associate superintendent.
 - 3. The associate superintendent will give the report and a recommendation to the superintendent within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the committee's report.
 - 4. The superintendent will render a decision within ten (10) working days of receipt of the committee's report and the recommendation of the associate superintendent. The superintendent will provide written notification of the decision to the complainant(s).
- C. The complainant(s) may appeal the superintendent's decision per board policy governing the appeal process.
- D. No further re-evaluation will be made for at least two (2) years after the board has rendered a decision.

Approved:

original signed by

Linda D. Burgee
Superintendent

Frederick County Public Schools

115 East Church Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material

Title _____

Author _____ Type of Material _____

Publisher or Producer (if known) _____

Complainant's Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Email Address _____ Telephone _____

Complainant represents: Self Organization _____ Other Group _____
(Please name) (Please name)

Name of school where this material is in use: _____

1. What are your objections to the material? (Please be specific; cite instances.) _____

2. What do you believe might be the result of using this material? _____

3. For what age group would you recommend this material? _____

4. What would you list as the good points of this material? _____

5. Did you read, view, or listen to material in its entirety? _____
What parts? _____
6. What material of equal quality would you recommend in its place? _____

Date

Signature of Complainant

Return completed form to: _____