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MSBA/MASA Model Policy 606

Orig. 1995

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606 TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for selection of textbooks and instructional materials.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Instructional resources are defined as anything that is read, listened to, manipulated, observed, or used by students as part of the instructional process in the classroom.
- B. Instructional resources include, but are not limited to books, periodicals, films/ videos, Internet, television programs, field trips, speakers, and other print, non-print, or electronic resources.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school board recognizes that selection of textbooks and instructional materials is a vital component of the school district's curriculum. The school board also recognizes that it has the authority to make final decisions on selection of all textbooks and instructional materials.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY OF SELECTION

- A. While the school board retains its authority to make final decisions on the selection of textbooks and instructional materials, the school board recognizes the expertise of the professional staff and the vital need of such staff to be primarily involved in the recommendation of textbooks and instructional materials. Teachers, by virtue of their training and experience, are best qualified to select instructional resources for use with their students. Accordingly, the school board delegates to the superintendent or his/her designee the responsibility to direct the professional staff in formulating recommendations to the school board on textbooks and other instructional materials.
- B. In reviewing textbooks and instructional materials during the selection process, the professional staff shall select materials that:
 - 1. support the goals and objectives of the education programs;
 - 2. consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
 - 3. foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and varied opinion;
 - 4. fit within the constraints of the school district budget;
 - 5. are in the English language. Another language may be used, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 124D.61;
 - 6. permit grade-level instruction for students to read and study America's founding documents, including documents that contributed to the foundation or maintenance of America's representative form of limited government, the Bill of

Rights, our free-market economic system, and patriotism; and

7. do not censor or restrain instruction in American or Minnesota state history or heritage based on religious references in original source documents, writings, speeches, proclamations, or records.
 8. illustrate the accurate contributions made by various groups to our national heritage and the world;
 9. illustrate historical and contemporary forces in society to enable users to recognize and understand social, economic, personal, and political problems;
 10. represent a diversity of perspectives and experiences in order to promote learning, critical thinking, and objective evaluation.
- C. The superintendent shall be responsible for developing procedures and guidelines to establish an orderly process for the review and recommendation of textbooks and other instructional materials by the professional staff. Such procedures and guidelines shall provide opportunity for input and consideration of the views of students, parents, and other interested members of the school district community. This procedure shall be coordinated with the school district's curriculum development effort and may utilize advisory committees.

V. SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. The superintendent shall be responsible for keeping the school board informed of progress on the part of staff and others involved in the textbook and other instructional materials review and selection process.
- B. The superintendent or his/her designee shall present a recommendation to the school board on the selection of textbooks and other instructional materials after completion of the review process as outlined in this policy.

VI. RECONSIDERATION OF TEXTBOOKS OR OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. The school board recognizes differences of opinion on the part of some members of the school district community relating to certain areas of the instruction program. Interested persons may request an opportunity to review materials and submit a request for reconsideration of the use of certain textbooks or instructional materials.
- B. The superintendent shall be responsible for the development of guidelines and procedures to identify the steps to be followed to seek reconsideration of textbooks or other instructional materials.
- C. The superintendent shall present a procedure to the school board for review and approval regarding reconsideration of textbooks or other instructional materials. When approved by the school board, such procedure shall be an addendum to this policy.

VII. RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURES: HANDLING INQUIRIES CONCERNING MATERIALS

C. Statement of Procedure

Citizens have the right to examine the content of materials and methods of implementing the curriculum. In order to consider the opinions of those persons in the school and the community and avoid the possibility of bias or prejudice consistently

influencing curricular and/or materials selection, a standardized procedure will be used to openly examine the objections to the specified curriculum resource.

D. Definition of Challenge

A challenge is defined as a written statement of opposition to a resource requesting that it be excluded, included, or restricted. A challenger must be a parent, guardian, adult student, or employee of the school district who objects to the inclusion or exclusion of instructional resource(s) in the district's educational program.

E. Step by Step Procedures

1. Routing and Inquiry

- a. The most logical place for answering questions or explaining circumstances is at the school level. Citizens are encouraged to direct inquiries to the teacher and principal involved. When contacted, the principal will provide a copy of the district *Policy 606: Textbooks and Instructional Materials*. The principal will inform the teacher(s) in question of the inquiry and direct them to follow the informal procedure.
- b. Any inquiry brought to the attention of the superintendent, director of teaching and learning, and/or any School Board member should be redirected to the building level

2. Informal Procedure

- a. The teacher will make person-to-person or by phone contact with the challenger in order to ascertain the problem, explain the rationale for using the resource for method of instruction, its intended educational use, and method of assessment.
 - i. If the challenger is satisfied, the matter is dropped at this point.
 - ii. If the challenger is not satisfied, the teacher will offer alternative instructional materials outlined in form 606f2.
 - iii. If the challenger denies the alternative instructional materials, proceed to the Formal Procedure.

3. Formal Procedure

- a. The teacher will contact the principal to inform them a resolution was not obtained.
- b. The principal will make person-to-person or phone contact with the challenger to explain the formal process and provide a copy of this policy and the *Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form.
- c. After reading or viewing the reconsideration material in its entirety, the challenger may submit a *Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form to the principal.
- d. After receiving the completed *Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form, the principal will provide the teacher with the *Staff Response to Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form. The teacher will submit the completed form to the principal within 7 school days.
- e. Upon receipt of the completed forms, the principal submits the forms to the superintendent or their designee for official action. Official action shall mean submitting the request to a Re-Evaluation Committee for resolution.
- f. The membership of the Re-Evaluation Committee may be composed of the principal, superintendent's designee, a school board member, community members, students where appropriate, and teachers as appointed by the principal. Neither the challenger nor the teacher(s) involved will serve on the Re-Evaluation Committee.
- g. Upon receipt of the completed forms, the Re-Evaluation Committee will take the following steps:

- i. Read, view or listen to the instructional material in its entirety.
- ii. Check general acceptance of the material by reading professional reviews, reports and recommended lists.
- iii. Determine the extent to which the instructional material supports the curriculum and meets the selection process criteria.
- iv. Review the *Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* and *Staff Response to Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* forms. The teacher(s) and challenger may choose to be present to observe the proceedings.
- v. Complete the *Re-Evaluation Committee Response to Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form, judging the material based on its intended educational use and value as a whole, rather than on passages or sections that may be taken out of context.
- vi. Present the *Re-Evaluation Committee Response to Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials* form to the Superintendent.
- h. The Superintendent will make a decision regarding the challenged instructional materials based on their own review of the materials and the committee's recommendations. The results of the decision will be communicated to the challenger, principal(s), and teacher(s) involved.
- i. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the Board of Education within sixty (60) days.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 9 (Compulsory Instruction)
 Minn. Stat. § 120B.235 (American Heritage Education)
 Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 2 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)
 Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subd. 8 (School Board Responsibilities)
 Minn. Stat. § 124D.59-124D.61 (Education for English Learners Act)
 Minn. Stat. § 127A.10 (State Officials and School Board Members to be Disinterested; Penalty)
Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988)
Board of Educ. v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 589, 875 S.Ct. 675, 17 L.Ed. 2d 629 (1967)
Pratt v. Independent Sch. Dist. No. 831, 670 F.2d 771 (8th Cir. 1982)
Webster v. New Lenox Sch. Dist., 917 F.2d 1004 (7th Cir. 1990)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 603 (Curriculum Development)
 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 604 (Instructional Curriculum)

CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Request Initiated By: _____ Date Submitted: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email: _____

Concerned party for reconsideration represent:

☐

Self

☐

Organization: _____

☐

Other: _____

Materials for Reconsideration

1. Materials(s) on which you are commenting.

Type of Material: _____ Title: _____

Author : _____ Copyright: _____ Publisher: _____

Additional Information: _____

2. School, grade level, subject area material is currently used.

-
3. Have you read/reviewed the material in its entirety? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Comment on the material as a whole.

5. Comment on matters that specifically concern you with this material.

6. Comment on how the material could negatively affect students.

7. Comment on what is worthwhile or positive about this material.

8. Describe the outcome you would like us to consider?

Citizen Recommendation

9. What do you believe is an appropriate option for the school district to pursue in addressing the concern?

Return the completed form to the appropriate building principal.
Attach additional pages if needed.

606f2 ALTERNATIVE COURSE FORM

Alternative Instruction Course/Unit Procedure

1. Parent/guardian discusses the course/unit objectives and/or resources of concern with the course instructor and/or building principal.
2. Parent/guardian submits 606form2 Alternative Course Form found on the ISD #738 website [<https://www.isd738.org/district-policies.html>] to the building principal.
3. Principal schedules a meeting with the parent/guardian and counselor [secondary level only].
4. Parent/guardian develops a plan to teach course content and submits the plan to the building principal. Plan must be approved by the building principal.
5. Parent/guardian submits coursework to the building principal.
6. Once coursework is assessed and evaluated, the building principal submits credit/grade [P/F] to counselor [secondary] or administrative assistant [elementary].
7. If requesting alternative instruction for an entire course that will be completed during the school year, the course must count as one of the student's courses for the semester.

Once all signatures have been collected, the form should be given to the counselor or designee to award credit.

606form2 ALTERNATIVE COURSE FORM

Request Submitted By: _____

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone/Alternate Phone Number: _____

Grade: _____ School Building: _____

Course or Class: _____

Reason(s) for Objection: _____

Action Taken by School (list resources to be used, method of instruction):

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ Plan to teach course content approved

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ Coursework submitted

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Superintendent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Once all signatures have been collected, the form should be given to the counselor or designee to award credit.

**STAFF RESPONSE TO CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Staff Response By: _____ Date Submitted: _____

School: _____

Materials for Reconsideration

1. Materials(s) on which you are commenting.

Type of Material: _____ Title: _____

Author : _____ Copyright: _____ Publisher: _____

Additional Information: _____

List the standard and benchmark the material is used to teach. _____

Is it related to an essential standard? Yes / No

Is the resource listed on the curriculum map? Yes / No

If the resource is not listed on the curriculum map...

- Why did you decide to use this resource rather than the one identified? _____

- Did you discuss this change of resource with your PLC? _____

- Are other staff members using this resource in your department or grade? Yes / No

2. What was the purpose in choosing this instructional material?

3. Comment on what is worthwhile or positive about this material.

4. The following processes preceded the placing of the order for this material:

☐ Recommended by department chair, teacher, or administrator.

☐ Reviewed favorably in the following professional review sources:

a) Title _____ date _____

b) Title _____ date _____

c) Title _____ date _____

☐ Followed district selection process and procedures

☐ Other, please explain _____

5. For what age group was this material used, and how was it made available to students?

6. Describe the instructional methods used in presenting this material?

Staff Recommendation

7. What do you believe is an appropriate option for the school district to pursue in addressing the concern?

Return the completed form to the appropriate building principal.
Attach additional pages if needed.