

## **Controversial Issues and Instructional Materials**

### **1. Procedures for Review of Complaints Associated with the Handling of Controversial Issues or Materials in the Schools**

Parents often want to speak with school personnel to express concern or lack of understanding about school programs. All personnel shall receive these questions or complaints with courtesy, and an effort shall be made to explain the school's position on what has occurred. When a parent is concerned about a specific program, method, material, or learning experience to the extent that he wishes the school to review or change (add, delete or alter) its program, the following procedures shall be followed:

#### Filing of Complaint

- a. All criticisms will be presented in writing (see form attached) to the school principal and shall be acknowledged by the principal in writing within two working days.
- b. The principal, within three days after receiving written complaint, will forward to the superintendent a copy of the complaint with a copy of his acknowledgment to the complainant.
- c. The superintendent will review the complaint, determine whether the complaint requires a review committee, appoint members to the committee, and hold the first meeting within 10 working days of receipt of complaint form from principal (see No. 2).
  - (1) A building-level review committee may be formed when the complaint deals with a program or activity unique to that school building.
  - (2) A District-level review committee may be formed when the complaint concerns a program or activity common to all schools of similar grade levels within the District.

### **2. Establishment of Review Committee**

- a. A building-level review committee shall be composed of the principal, the appropriate department head or teacher, a lay person appointed by the chair of the Board, and a member of the district office staff who will chair the meeting.
- b. A District-level review committee will be composed of an administrator, two lay persons appointed by the chair of the Board, a school board member, two faculty members, and consultants as necessary.
- c. The appropriate media specialist will serve without a vote when library materials are questioned.

### **3. Committee Review Procedure**

- a. Copies of the complaint shall be given to all members.
- b. The building review committee shall make recommendations or a progress report to the principal within 12 working days of the first committee meeting date.
- c. The District review committee shall prepare a report of recommendations for the superintendent. The committee will make its recommendation solely on the basis of the concerns spelled out in the complaint. Any other concerns of the committee may be outlined in the report to the superintendent, but should not affect the Committee's decision.
- d. The recommendations will include one of the following:
  - (1) Dismissal of the complaint;
  - (2) Support of the complaint.

### **4. The Decision on the Complaint**

- a. The superintendent shall review the complaint and the review committee recommendations, then decide whether to dismiss or support the complaint.
- b. The superintendent shall notify the complainant of his/her decisions within two working days after receiving the recommendations of the review committee.
- c. The superintendent shall notify the Board of all complaints filed and shall inform the Board of his/her decision on each complaint.
- d. The complainant may appeal the decision of the superintendent to the Board.

### **5. Suggestions to Principals for Handling Complaints at the Building Level**

- a. If the complainant telephones, listen courteously and invite him/her to file his/her complaint in writing, but make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats.
- b. If the complainant writes, acknowledge the letter promptly and politely.
- c. In either case, inform him that complaint forms may be picked up at the school office so that the formal statements may be considered by the review committee of the staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT 10  
Cannon Beach ~ Gearhart ~ Seaside

REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL OR  
RESOLUTION OF A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

Fill in as appropriate.

Issue (briefly state your concern) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Complainant represents: Self \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Other (identify) \_\_\_\_\_

1. To what do you object? Discussion of the issue in the classroom? Method used in dealing with the issue or material? (please be specific)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What do you believe might be the result of discussing this issue or using this material in the school?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Did you review the material in its entirety? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Read all of the book or see the film and hear the discussions preceding and following the showing?)  
If not, what part did you review? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you acquainted with the judgment of this material by professional critics?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What would you like your school to do about this issue or material?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant