

**MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVES**

Descriptor Term: Reconsideration of Library Materials and Instructional Materials and Textbooks	Descriptor No: STU40	Effective Date: 07/19
Revised:		08/22

1 The Murfreesboro City Board of Education supports principles of intellectual freedom and
 2 recognizes the rights of employees, students, and parents to offer suggestions and criticisms
 3 regarding the use of library and instructional materials in the school system.

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 5 It is the policy of the Board to select, adopt, purchase, and use library and instructional materials that
 6 are of high educational value for all students. Library and instructional materials includes print and
 7 non-print materials and other learning resources. If the suitability of particular books or other library and
 8 instructional materials is questioned, the Board of Education has adopted the following policy:

- 9 • Complaints may only be filed by individuals who are employees, students, or parents/guardians
 10 of students in Murfreesboro City Schools.
- 11 • Complaints must be made in writing.
- 12 • Any person who wishes to file a complaint and bypasses the process below by initially seeking
 13 action from the Board of Education or Director of Schools shall be informed of the policy and
 14 instructed first to seek solution to their problem with the involved teacher, librarian, or
 15 principal.
- 16 • Any material that has been through the Library and Instructional Materials Review process
 17 within the past three (3) years will not be reconsidered. The earlier committee action will stand.

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 19 When a complaint regarding a particular book or other instructional material is made, the
 20 following procedure is to be followed:

- 21 1. A complaint must be shared with the involved teacher(s) and/or library media specialist.
 22 The teacher or library media specialist will appropriately listen to the concern, explain the
 23 rationale for the use of the material. This meeting will occur within 10 school days of receiving
 24 the complaint. The teacher or library media specialist will refer the complaint to the principal if
 25 the attempt to explain is unsuccessful.
- 26 2. If the complaint in number one is not resolved, a complaint may then be filed with the school
 27 principal. The principal shall appropriately listen to the concerns, explain the rationale for the
 28 materials, and review the validity of the complaint. This meeting will occur within ten (10)
 29 school days of receiving notice of the unresolved complaint from the teacher or library media
 30 specialist.

- 31 3. If the complaint in number two is not resolved, the school principal will inform the
32 Complainant that a complaint may then be filed with the Director of Schools using the
33 Reconsideration of Library and Instructional Materials Form. Once the form is completed
34 and received, the Director of Schools will determine if the complaint should be referred to a
35 Library Instructional Materials Review Committee.
- 36 4. If the complaint is referred to a Library and Instructional Materials Review Committee, the
37 Director of Schools will appoint committee members. Members will include:
38 ○ Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Chair (responsible for
39 record-keeping)
40 ○ Principal of an uninvolved school
41 ○ Assistant principal of an uninvolved school
42 ○ A parent of an MCS student who is not a school district employee
43 ○ A Murfreesboro Education Association representative (to be appointed by the
44 Murfreesboro Education Association president)
- 45 5. The Committee will take the following steps after receiving the challenged materials:
46 ○ Read, view, study, and/or listen to the material in its entirety. Passages should not
47 be taken out of context. The committee shall have thirty (30) days to make a decision.
48 ○ Check general acceptance of the material by reading recognized evaluative
49 reviews and/or consulting the collections of other schools.
50 ○ Determine the extent to which the material supports the curriculum.
51 ○ Judge the material objectively for its strengths and values and/or specific objections.
52 Values and faults should be weighed against on each other with the decision based on
53 the material as a whole.
54 ○ If needed, an invitation may be extended to the complainant to meet with the
55 Committee at a specified date, time, and place to present their opinions. The teacher,
56 school librarian, principal, or other person involved in the selection of the questioned
57 material shall have the same opportunity.
58 ○ Base decisions on the principle of freedom to learn rather than on the defense of
59 specific items of library or instructional material. Freedom of inquiry is vital to
60 education in a democratic society.
61 ○ Present decision in a written report to Director of Schools, complainant, and any
62 affected school employees within fifteen (15) working days of the decision. The report
63 will describe the review process, state the recommendations of the committee, and
64 contain both majority and minority opinions as appropriate.
- 65 6. If the complainant wishes further action after receiving the decision of the committee, an
66 appeal may be made to the Board of Education within fifteen (15) working days of the date
67 of the committee decision. This appeal should be made in writing to the Director of Schools,
68 who will schedule the matter on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the School Board.
69 If no appeal is filed within the above deadline, the determination of the review committee
70 shall be final.

71 The best interests of the students and school shall be of paramount consideration throughout the
72 process.

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74 Related Board Policies: 4.400, 4.4001

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77 Legal References:

78 1. 20 USCA § 1232h; 34 CFR § 98.3;
79 TCA 49-6-7003

Reconsideration of Library and Instructional Materials Form

Complainant Information

Name:

Telephone:

Address, City, State, Zip:

If the complainant is an MCS student or parent, please complete this section

School student attends:

Student grade level:

Library or Instructional Material Information

Book Other Text Other Materials (Circle one)

Book or Text Title:

Paperback Hardcover (Circle one)

Author:

Publisher and Date:

Other Materials (Identify):

Complaint

1. Have you read this work in its entirety?
2. Have you discussed this work through an informal complaint with the teacher and/or library media specialist? What was the result of that conversation?
3. Have you discussed this work through an informal complaint with the school principal? What was the result of that conversation?
4. Have you learned what reviewers or other students of literature have written about this work? If so, what did you learn? Would you be willing to provide summaries of the reviews you have collected? If so, please include review sources and dates published.
5. What do you understand to be the general purpose of the author in this work?
6. What do you understand to be the general purpose for using this work in the curriculum?
7. To what specifically in this work do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages.)
8. What specifically is positive in this work? (Please be specific; cite pages.)
9. What action are you requesting be taken with this work?

_____ Do not assign it to my child.

_____ Withdraw it from all students as well as from my child.

_____ Send it back to the district for reevaluation.

10. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject treated?