

SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Salem, Connecticut

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

CHALLENGED MATERIAL:

The following procedure shall be followed whenever there is a request for the evaluation of instructional material:

1. The Superintendent shall establish an ad hoc School Media Advisory Committee including representation from the following:
  - a. teachers competent in the area of the content covered by the material;
  - b. administrators;
  - c. media specialist.
2. Objections to materials and requests for re-evaluation must be presented in writing on the proper form to the Superintendent. Request for “Reconsideration of Instructional Materials” (attachment A) forms are available in the school office.
3. Initial action on a written request on the proper forms shall be taken no later than fifteen school days after receipt of the request.
4. A written report from the review committee (attachments B and C) shall be submitted to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall then communicate his or her decision to the person requesting the re-evaluation.
5. Should the decision of the Superintendent not satisfy the person requesting the re-evaluation, the complainant may request a special hearing by the Board of Education in order to review the Superintendent’s decision. This request shall be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Education.
6. Once instructional material has been adopted by the Board of Education, the material cannot be changed without approval by the Board of Education. Challenged instructional materials shall remain in use in the school pending a final decision by the Board of Education.

(cf. 1220 – Citizen’s Advisory Committees)  
(cf. 1312 – Public Complaints Policy)

(cf. 6144 – Controversial Issues)  
(cf. 6161 – Equipment, Books, Materials: Provision/Section)  
(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression)

Legal Reference: Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853 (1982). Keyishian v. Board of Regents 385 U.S. 589, 603 (1967). President’s Council, District 25v. Community School Board No.25 457 F. 2d289 (1972), cert. Denied 409 U.S. 998 (1976). Minarcini v. Strongsville City School District, 541 F. 2d 577 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1976). Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81).

Procedure Adopted: March 11, 1997  
Revised Procedures 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: June 4, 2007  
Revised Procedures Adopted: July 16, 2007

jlk

**SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Salem, Connecticut**

**CHALLENGED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FORM**

Please check type of material

( ) book    ( ) film            ( ) record            ( ) periodical            ( ) filmstrip  
( ) kit        ( ) pamphlet            ( ) cassette            ( ) Other\_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher or Producer: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_            State: \_\_\_\_\_            Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

The following questions are to be answered after the complainant has read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety. If sufficient space is not provided, attach additional sheets. (Please sign your name to each additional attachment.)

1. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific, frames in a filmstrip, film sequence, etc.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What do you feel might be the result of a student using this material?

4. For what age group would you recommend this material?
  
5. What are the positive things about this material?
  
6. Would you care to recommend alternate materials of the same subject and format?

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return this *completed* form to the Superintendent.

**SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Salem, Connecticut**

**CHECKLIST FOR SUPERINTENDENT'S BROAD BASED REVIEW COMMITTEE  
FOR RECONSIDERATION OF CHALLENGED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL –  
NON-FICTION**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Purpose

- 1) What is the overall purpose of the material?
  
- 2) Is the purpose accomplished?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

B. Authenticity

- 1) Is the author competent and qualified in the field?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No
- 2) What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field?
- 3) Is the material up-to-date?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No
- 4) Are information sources well documented?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No
- 5) Are translations and retellings faithful to the original?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

C. Appropriateness

- 1) Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of Salem School?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No
- 2) Is it appropriate to the level of instructional intended?      \_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No
- 3) Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

D. Content

- 1) Is the content of the material well presented by providing adequate scope, range, depth, and continuity?  Yes  No
- 2) Does this material present information not otherwise available?  
 Yes  No
- 3) Does this information give a new dimension or direction to its subject?  
 Yes  No

E. Reviews

- 1) Source of review \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorably reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ Unfavorably reviewed \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids?  
 Yes  No If answer is yes, please list titles of selection aids.

Additional Comments

Recommendation by **SUPERINTENDENT'S BROAD BASED REVIEW COMMITTEE:**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of **Superintendent's Broad Based Review Committee members:**

**SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Salem, Connecticut**

**CHECKLIST FOR SUPERINTENDENT'S BROAD BASED REVIEW COMMITTEE  
FOR RECONSIDERATION OF CHALLENGED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL –  
FICTION AND OTHER LITERARY FORMS**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Purpose

- 1) What is the purpose, theme or message of the material? How well does the author/producer/composer accomplish this purpose?
- 2) If the story is fantasy, is it the type that has imaginative appeal and is suitable for children?     \_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No
- 3) Will the reading and/or viewing and/or listening to material result in more compassionate understanding of human beings?     \_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No
- 4) Does it offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, and problems of various minority groups?     \_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No
- 5) Are any questionable elements of the story an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message?     \_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No

B. Content

- 1) Does a story about modern times give a realistic picture of life as it is now?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No
- 2) Does the story avoid an oversimplified view of life, one which leaves the reader with the general feeling that life is sweet and rosy or ugly and meaningless?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No
- 3) When factual information is part of the story, is it presented accurately?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No
- 4) Is prejudicial appeal readily identifiable by the potential reader?  
\_\_\_\_\_Yes     \_\_\_\_\_No

- 5) Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of potential readers?  Yes  No
- 6) Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live?  Yes  No
- 7) Does the material offend in some special way the sensibilities of women or a minority group by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters?  Yes  No
- 8) Is there preoccupation with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate for children?  
 Yes  No; for young adults  Yes  No
- 9) If there is use of offensive language, is it appropriate to the purpose of the text for children?  Yes  No; for young adults  Yes  No
- 10) Is the material free from derisive names and epithets that would offend minority groups?  Yes  No
- 11) Is the material well written or produced?  Yes  No
- 12) Does the story give a broader understanding of human behavior without stressing differences of class, race, color, sex, education, religion or philosophy in any adverse way?  Yes  No
- 13) Does the material make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas?  Yes  No
- 14) Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste?  Yes  No
- 15) Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story?  Yes  No

Additional Comments:

Recommendation by **SUPERINTENDENT'S BROAD BASED REVIEW COMMITTEE:**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures of **Superintendent's Broad Based Review Committee members:**