

Policy Subject	Location Code	Adoption Date
COMPLAINTS RELATING TO INSTUCTIONAL MATERIALS	705.1	11/19/87
	Rescinds/Amends	Adopted

The Norfolk Board of Education is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the Norfolk Public school System. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school district.

It is recognized that opinions differ concerning appropriateness of instructional matters. Occasionally an individual or group may find instructional materials used in the schools in conflict with their views. The final decision for disposition of controversial instructional matter shall rest with the board of education.

The board of education assumes the position that no parent or group of parents has the right to determine the instructional matter for students other than their own children. Tile board does, however, recognize the right of parents to request that their children not have to read a book or see a given film provided a written request is made to the appropriate building principal.

Any patron who wishes to register a protest regarding the utilization of instructional material being used in the school should contact the building principal responsible for the building in which the material is being or has been used and indicate the nature of the concern or of the complaint. The building principal will schedule a conference with the patron and attempt to resolve the complaint or concern. This conference should take place within five school days of receipt of the complaint. The building principal should notify the patron in writing of his/her decision concerning the matter within five school days after this conference.

If the patron is not satisfied and wishes to pursue a formal complaint procedure, the proper school district complaint form should be filled out and returned to the building principal from whom it was obtained. The building principal will convene a meeting of that building’s advisory review committee, one of whom will be appointed chairperson. This meeting should take place within ten school days from the receipt of the written complaint.

The review committee will consist of a minimum of five voting staff members and two voting community members. The committee will study the complaint and make a recommendation as to its disposition. The complainant should be invited to participate in the study as an ex officio member of the committee. A staff member directly involved in the selection and/or use of the material should be an ex officio member of this committee. The building principal will be an ex officio member of this committee. Within five school days of the conclusion of their study, the committee will submit their report in writing to the building principal.

If the complainant is still not satisfied and wishes to pursue the matter further, the building principal will notify the superintendent of schools regarding this failure to resolve the complaint at the building level. The building principal will provide the superintendent with a complete documented written account detailing the nature of the complaint and the steps which have been taken in attempting its resolution. This notification should take place within five school days after the complainant notifies the principal of his/her dissatisfaction.

The superintendent will arrange for a conference with the principal, the complainant and other appropriate parties in order to attempt to resolve the complaint. This conference should take place within ten school days following the receipt of the written report from the building principal. The superintendent should inform all participating parties in writing of his/her decision regarding the matter within five school days after the conference.

If the issue cannot be resolved at this level and the complainant wishes to pursue the matter, the superintendent will call a meeting of the school district's review committee and appoint a chairperson for that committee. The committee will consist of four community members, two of whom are school board members, and five professional staff members. If any member of the school district's review committee is personally involved in the complaint, the superintendent will appoint a substitute.

The members of this committee will evaluate the material in advance of a conference with the complainant. The committee will then confer with the complainant and any other parties the committee feels would be necessary to its process and make its decision. The conference should take place within ten school days from the time the superintendent is notified of the complainant's dissatisfaction with all previous efforts to resolve the issue. The committee's decision should be in writing to the superintendent of schools and should come within ten school days after their conference with the complainant. The superintendent will then inform the complainant of the committee's decision regarding the disposition of the complaint. This information should be disseminated in writing within five school days of its receipt.

If there is an appeal of the district review committee's recommendation the board of education will review the committee's recommendation as well as the complainant's written reason for not agreeing with the committee's recommendation. The committee will present its recommendation to the board of education at its next regular meeting. The board of education will take the appeal under advisement and inform the complainant of its decision in writing within ten school days.