

## COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

### Public Complaints

Public concerns when motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program shall be addressed by the procedures outlined below. Complaints and criticisms are most valuable when they represent the considered recommendations of public-spirited citizens and organizations that have studied all the pertinent facts. In this way such complaints and concerns may contribute to the school's effectiveness in carrying out its basic educational mission.

Complaints/Concerns will be investigated with regard to the nature of the problem, the facts of the problem, and a review of the evidence. The investigation will be done in an expeditious manner.

### General Complaint Procedures

Although no member of the community shall be denied the right to petition the Board of Education for redress of a grievance, complaints shall be referred back through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation, or action by the Board. A parent, citizen, or organization should direct his/her complaint/concern through the following channels:

1. The particular staff member concerned
2. The appropriate administrator, i.e. Principal, Director of Guidance, Director of Special Education, etc.
3. Superintendent
4. Board of Education

Resolution shall be sought at the lowest level of the above. If unresolved at a lower level, the complaint or concern shall be referred to the Board of Education by the Superintendent. The only exception is complaints that concern Board actions or Board operation only.

### Complaints Concerning Staff Members

In no case shall a parent or citizen enter any classroom without securing prior permission of the principal unless at the invitation of the teacher/principal. The policy is intended to prevent any interruption of the educational process.

Board of Education members are to refer persons making complaints to the appropriate administrator and/or staff member and are encouraged to ask that complaints be handled according to the method outlined above and/or in the administrative regulations.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS (continued...)

Complaints Regarding Instructional Materials

The Board of Education has established procedures for addressing complaints regarding the utilization of books and other instructional materials. The procedures and forms are described in the administrative regulations for this policy and in Policy #6161.

A parent and/or legal guardian has the right to request that his/her child not read, view or hear given material provided a written request is made to the appropriate building Principal. No parent and/or legal guardian has the right to determine instructional materials for students other than his/her own children.

In all cases, the decision to retain or reject shall be made on the basis of whether the material represents life in its true proportions, whether circumstances are realistically dealt with, and whether the material has literary or social value. Factual material shall be included in all instructional material collections.

(cf. #1220 - Citizens' Advisory Committees)

(cf. #6161 - Selection of Textbooks and Instructional Materials)

Legal References: *Keyishian v. Board of Regents* 385 U.S. 589, 603 (1967)

*President's Council, District 25 v. Community School Board No. 25* 457 F.2d 289 (1972), cert Denied 409 U. S. 998 (1976)

*Minarcini v. Strongville City School District*, 541 F. 2d 577 (6", cir. 1976).

*Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School district no. 26 v. Pico*, 456 U.S. 853 (1982).

Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81).

Connecticut General Statutes

10-238 Petition for hearing by board of education

Administrative Regulations to Policy #1312  
Complaints and Concerns

**Complaints Regarding Staff Members**

When a formal complaint is filed at the appropriate administrative level, the administrator concerned shall render a written decision on the complaint within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint. If no such decision is rendered within ten days the complainant may pursue the complaint to the next administrative level.

If a written formal complaint is not resolved satisfactorily at the administrative level, it may be filed in writing with the Board of Education. The complaint shall be investigated and a decision rendered within thirty (30) days.

**Request For Re-Evaluation of Instructional Materials**

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

1. The Superintendent shall call a meeting of the Instructional Materials Selection Committee whose membership is broadly representative of:
  - a. Teachers competent in the area of the content covered by the print or non-print material.
  - b. Administrators, directors, and supervisors appropriate to the level and/or subject for which material is used.
  - c. A media specialist shall serve on the review committee.
2. Objections to materials and requests for re-evaluations must be presented in writing on the proper form. Requests for Re-Evaluation of Materials forms are available in the office of the Superintendent.
3. Initial action on a written request on the proper forms shall be taken no later than 30 days after receipt of the request.
4. A written report from the review committee shall be submitted to the Superintendent. The superintendent shall 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 board of education may hold a special hearing to review the Superintendent's decision.
6. Once the instructional material has been adopted and re-evaluated the material cannot be subject to further review without special approval by the Board of Education. Challenged instructional materials shall remain in use in the schools pending a final decision by the Board of Education.