



Book	Policy Manual
Section	Section I - Instructional Program
Title	Copy of PROCESS FOR CHALLENGED MATERIALS
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PROCESS FOR CHALLENGED MATERIALS

The Virginia Board of Education places with local School Boards the responsibility for the selection, approval, and use of instructional materials. Despite the care taken in selecting suitable instructional materials, and despite the qualifications and expertise of persons involved in that selection process, it is recognized that occasional objections to materials will be made by the public. It is, therefore, the policy of the School Board to provide channels of communication and a fair procedure for parents and guardians to follow in expressing and resolving concerns about instructional materials used in teaching the curriculum.

Complaints about curriculum, instructional, or supplemental materials, other than those pertaining to sexually explicit content (see Policy IIA and IIABB) shall be presented in writing using the "Media Complaint Form," which may be obtained from the principal or the central office. The standard and procedure for review shall be consistently applied in recognition of the respective rights and responsibilities of all concerned. Materials shall be considered for their educational suitability and shall not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. Challenges which are not resolved at the building level shall be submitted to the superintendent or his/her designee. The decision of the superintendent may be appealed to the School Board or reviewed at the Board's request. The decision of the Board will be final.

Procedure

A parent or guardian of a student, with whom specific materials are being employed or by whom the specific materials have been accessed, who challenges the use of such material in a school should be given an explanation of the following procedure for challenged materials.

1. The complainant should be invited to have a conference with the principal and the professional person on the staff responsible for the use of the challenged material to see if the matter can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. (If the objection involves more than one school, all steps of the procedure delegated to the principal will be handled by the Assistant Superintendent of Innovation and Learning.)
2. If an agreement cannot be reached, the principal should assist the complainant in filing a formal complaint by using the "Media Complaint Form." The staff person should fill out the "Media Complaint Response Form."
3. Once the formal complaint has been filed, the principal shall convene and chair a committee including two parents and three staff members to review the material in question to see if it conforms to the County textbook/materials selection policies. The committee should work to provide a recommendation within 60 days of receiving the "media complaint response form." If this committee can agree on a recommendation acceptable to all parties as to the disposition of the challenged materials, the principal will carry out the recommendation of the committee. The principal shall also file a written report of the committee findings with the Superintendent.
4. If the complaint cannot be resolved, all relevant materials will be forwarded to the Superintendent. The complainant, principal, or staff person has ten (10) business days to challenge the recommendation from the school level committee. If a challenge is initiated, the Superintendent or designee will convene a division level committee to review the challenged materials. The division level committee will be composed of community members and Rockingham County Public Schools staff members and will review the challenged materials as well as the school level committee's report, and make a recommendation to the Superintendent or designee. The division level committee shall include seven (7) members including (i) a school librarian or teacher; (ii) an Assistant Superintendent; (iii) the Supervisor of English; and (iv) four (4) parents, guardians, or other community members. The division level committee will have up to ninety (90) days to review the challenged Supplementary Materials and provide a recommendation to the Superintendent or designee.
5. The Superintendent, after reviewing the report of the division committee, may propose a solution to the problem. The complainant has 10 days to decide if he/she wishes to accept or reject the solution offered. The division level solution will apply to all RCPS schools, not just the one that originated the complaint. If resolution is not reached at this point, the Superintendent will make a recommendation for action to the School Board.
6. The School Board will make the final decision by instructing the principal to retain, modify, or withdraw the challenged materials.

7. None of these provisions in any respect diminishes the managerial responsibility and authority of the principal/designee to act as the instructional decision-making leader of the school and the responsibility and authority of the Superintendent/designee to act as the instructional decision-making leader of the division, subject to the ultimate and final authority of the School Board over all curriculum-related matters.
8. At their option, even if this policy is deemed by the principal/designee or Superintendent/designee not to apply to a particular situation in question, the principal/designee or the Superintendent/designee may utilize the processes outlined in this policy.

Media Complaint Response Form

See Rockingham County Public Schools Handbook of Administrative Directives: Forms for Challenged Materials Policy, AD-IIAC-6/09

Adopted:

Cross Ref.: Rockingham County Public Schools Administrative Directive: [Forms for Challenged Materials Policy, AD-IIAC-2/08](#)

IIA	Instructional Materials
IIAA	Textbook Selection and Adoption
IIAB	Supplementary Materials
IIABA	Supplementary Materials Selection
IIABB	Supplementary Materials Complaints
IIABB-F	Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Form
KL	Public Complaint

4/24 RCPS