

Public Concerns/Complaints about Instructional Resources

The Board of Education (the “Board”) for Mapleton Public Schools (the “District”) has approved principles governing the selection of all instructional materials, including library books, and has established policies pertaining to the selection process. However, the Board wishes to amplify its principles on the selection of books and other materials which present controversial topics or which for other reasons might be challenged.

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. District policies regarding these areas are as follows:

1. Religion: Factual, unbiased, material on all major religions has a place in school libraries.
2. Ideologies: Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education, and other phases of life.
3. Profanity/obscenity: Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit by media specialists and teachers who will take into consideration the maturity of students and the standards of the community.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the schools may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent/guardian to request that his/her child not read a given book. When such a request is presented, the teacher and/or school administrator should arrange for use of alternative materials meeting essentially the same instructional purpose. This does not apply, however, to basic program texts and materials that the Board has adopted.
2. The Board shall not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections, but recognizes that at times, a reevaluation of certain materials may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or material withdrawn from school use, the following process shall be followed:
 - a. The person who objects to the book or material shall be asked to document his or her concerns in writing, which will be given to the school director.

- b. Following receipt of the written complaint, the school director will forward it to the appropriate administrator, who will ensure the book or material is reevaluated.
- c. The reevaluation shall be based on the points offered above, the District's principles governing the selection of instructional materials, and the following guidelines:
 - i. A book shall not be excluded because of the writer's race, nationality, or political or religious views; and,
 - ii. The value of any book or material shall be judged as a whole, taking into account the purpose of the material rather than individual, isolated expressions or incidents in the work.
- d. The Superintendent (or designee) shall review the complaint and the reevaluation and render a decision.
- e. Should the solution be unsatisfactory to the complainant, he or she may appeal the decision to the Board.

The Board assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials made available to students. District professional staff is responsible for ensuring proper selection and compliance with District policies and procedures. The Board also recognizes the rights of individual parents/guardians with respect to controversial materials used by their own children and as such, will provide for the reevaluation of books and materials upon formal request, as set forth in this policy.

Adopted January 23, 2018, by the Board of Education for Mapleton Public Schools.

CROSS REFERENCES:

IJ: Instructional Resources and Materials

IMB: Teaching about Controversial Issues and Use of Controversial Materials