

# Santa Barbara Unified School District

## Administrative Regulation

AR 1312.2

### Community Relations

#### COMPLAINTS CONCERNING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

##### **Step 1: Informal Complaint**

If a staff member, district resident, or parent/guardian of a student enrolled in a district school has a complaint regarding the content or use of any specific instructional material, he/she shall informally discuss the material in question with the principal.

##### **Step 2: Formal Complaint**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the principal's initial response, he/she shall present a written complaint to the principal. Complaints regarding printed material shall name the author, title, and publisher and shall identify the objection by page and item numbers. In the case of nonprinted material, written information specifying the precise nature of the objection shall be given. Complainants shall sign all complaints and provide identifying information so that the district is able to make a proper reply. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Upon receiving a complaint, the principal shall acknowledge its receipt and answer any questions regarding procedure. The principal then shall notify the Superintendent or designee and the teacher(s) involved of the complaint.

During the investigation of the complaint, the challenged material may remain in use until a final decision has been reached. However, upon request of the parent/guardian who has filed the complaint, his/her child may be excused from using challenged materials until a resolution has been reached. The teacher shall assign the student an alternate material of equal merit.

##### **Step 3: Superintendent Determination**

The Superintendent or designee shall determine whether a review committee should be convened to review the complaint.

In general, a committee will only be convened to review challenged materials that are non-state board approved or materials that are not on one of the following lists:

- California Department of Education's (CDE) Recommended Literature lists
- CDE California Reading List, or
- English Learner Supplemental Materials-Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Materials lists (in accordance with Assembly Bill 1802).

If the Superintendent or designee determines that a review committee is not necessary, he/she shall issue a decision regarding the complaint.

##### **Step 4: Review Committee**

If the Superintendent or designee determines that a review committee is necessary, he/she shall appoint a committee composed of administrators and staff members selected from relevant instructional and administrative areas. The Superintendent or designee may also appoint community members, scholars, and/or experts to serve on the committee.

The review committee shall review the criteria specified in Board policy and shall determine the extent to which the challenged material supports the curriculum, the educational appropriateness of the material, and its suitability for the age level of the student.

Within 30 working days of being convened, the review committee shall summarize its findings in a written report. The Superintendent or designee shall notify the complainant of the committee's decision within 15 working days of receiving the committee's report.

**Step 5: Appeal to the Governing Board**

If the complainant remains unsatisfied, he/she may appeal the Superintendent's or the review committee's decision to the Board. The Board's decision shall be final.

*(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)*

SANTA BARBARA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Santa Barbara, California      April 28, 2009