



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

CHALLENGE OR CONTEST BY PARENTS FOR THE APPROPRIATENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL STUDENT

6180.3

Procedure No.

January 20, 1997

Date

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide procedures to permit a parent to challenge or otherwise contest the appropriateness of certain specific instructional materials as a part of the required curriculum for the education of a parent's own individual child.

- II. **POLICY:** The Board of Education recognizes the right of a parent(s) to challenge or contest the appropriateness of specific educational materials which are directed to the education of a parent's individual child. The Board of Education likewise recognizes that the parents' philosophic, religious or ethnic commitment may render generally acceptable instructional materials inappropriate for a specific child. However, there must also be no infringement of the right of students to free access to the many types of materials in the Prince George's County Public School System or the rights of teachers or administrators to select books and other educational materials in accordance with current trends in education.
(Board Policy 6180.3)

- III. **BACKGROUND:** The instructional materials and books used in the Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) are evaluated and selected by teams of teachers, administrators, lay people and central staff. The intent is to provide the very best material possible in an atmosphere of freedom and creativity. When a parent wishes to challenge the use of these materials as they apply to his or own child, these procedures offer an orderly and proper way to have the material reviewed and a decision rendered.

- IV. **DEFINITIONS:** The following definitions apply to the content of these administrative procedures:

Books: Textbooks, workbooks, library books, pamphlets, or other supplemental text materials.

Instructional Materials: Films, slides, videotapes, recordings, computer courseware, filmstrips, pictures, photographs, or similar media used in the educational processes.

Parent: The natural or adopted parent(s) of a pupil; the legal guardian of a pupil; the court appointed guardian.

- V. **PROCEDURES:** When a parent wishes to challenge or contest a specific book or other item of instructional material as inappropriate for his/her child, the following general procedures must be followed:
 - A. The Chief Educational Administrator, principal, teacher, or administrator concerned should explain that such items are carefully selected and



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evaluated by a team of school personnel and lay people, and that the intent is to provide fully appropriate materials for the educational objectives.

- B. If the explanation in A is not acceptable, the parent will be given the form: Request for Alternate Instructional Materials for an Individual Student.
- C. The parent should complete this form and return it to the Chief Educational Administrator/Principal or Principal.
- D. Upon receipt of the completed Request for Alternate Instructional Materials for an Individual Student, the Chief Educational Administrator/Principal or Principal will:
 - 1. Direct that the individual student be exempted from using the contested instructional materials, or participating in a group viewing, or discussion of the contested material. The individual student will be assigned alternate instructional materials.
 - 2. Send copy 1 of the completed Request for Reconsideration of Library or Classroom Instructional Materials to the Supervisor of Media and Instructional Materials, PGCPSS. The parent will be contacted and given the opportunity to present additional information by meeting with members of the appropriate Materials Evaluation Committee.
 - 3. Send copy 2 of the form to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.
 - 4. File copy 3 of the form in the school office.
 - 5. Give copy 4 of the form to the complainant.
- VI. **RELATED PROCEDURES:** Administrative Procedure 6180.1, Evaluation and Selection of Classroom Instructional Materials and Administrative Procedure 6180.2, Evaluation of Library Media Material.
- VII. **MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES:** This procedure will be regularly reviewed by the Supervisor of Media and Instructional Materials and updated as required.
- VIII. **CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDES:** This procedure specifically cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 6180.3, dated January 1, 1990.



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IX. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 20, 1997.

Approved by:
Jerome Clark
Superintendent of Schools

Distribution: All Administrative Handbook Holders