

Community Relations

Public Complaints

Board members shall refer persons making complaints about the schools or employees to the most immediate level at which the problems can be resolved and, as may be necessary, through lines of organization to the Superintendent of Schools. Parents should be made aware of the proper channels of communication and appeal. The decision of the principal regarding a student must include notice to the parents of the next step of appeal. Any appeal from the decision of the Superintendent to the Board shall be in writing and signed.

Upon receipt of a written petition signed by one percent of the voters or fifty voters, whichever is greater, the Board of Education shall hold a public hearing on any question specified in the petition within three weeks of receipt of the petition.

Challenged Material

A procedure for processing and responding to criticism of approved materials shall be established and followed. This procedure shall include a formal, signed complaint of a standard format. The Superintendent may appoint a committee to re-evaluate the material in question. Initial action on a written request on the proper form shall be taken no later than fifteen (15) school days after receipt of the request.

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. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6144 - Controversial Issues)

(cf. 6161 - Equipment, Books, Materials: Provision/Selection)

Legal Reference: *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. Strongsville City School District, 541 F. 2d 577 (6th Cir. 1976).
 Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v.
 Pico, 457 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.

Policy adopted: April 13, 2015

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Thomaston, Connecticut

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The Superintendent, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Board to discuss the complaint. Generally, all parties involved, including the school administration, shall be asked to attend such a meeting for the purpose of presenting additional facts, making further explanations, and clarifying the issues.

The Board may request a disinterested third party to act as a moderator to help it reach a mutually satisfactory solution. After the Board's decision, the usual appeal route pertains re: legal - may be appealed as is appropriate.

Any person who insults or abuses any teacher or other employee on school property or in the presence of students may be prosecuted by the district under the provisions of law.

Request for Re-Evaluation of Instructional Materials

The following procedure shall be followed whenever there is a request for the evaluation of instructional material other than textbooks:

1. Initial action on a written request on the proper form shall be taken no later than fifteen (15) school days after receipt of the request.
2. A written report from any review committee shall be submitted to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall then communicate his or her decision to the person requesting the re-evaluation.
3. Should the decision of the Superintendent not satisfy the person requesting the re-evaluation, the Board of Education may hold a hearing to review the Superintendent's decision.
4. Once instructional material has been adopted and re-evaluated the material cannot be subject to further review without 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.

(cf. 1220 - Citizens, Advisory Committees)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6144 - Controversial Issues)

(cf. 6161 - Equipment, Books, Materials: Provision/Selection)

Community Relations

Public Complaints (continued)

Legal Reference: *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853 (1982).

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. Strongsville City School District, 541 F. 2d 577 (6th Cir. 1976).

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

10-235 Indemnification of teachers, board and commission members and employees in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

10-236a Indemnification of educational personnel assaulted in the line of duty.