

VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

***TITLE: Challenged Controversial Materials
Complaints from the Public***

POLICY NUMBER: G026

Policy Statement:

The Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, through the superintendent, shall provide a formal procedure for hearing and resolving all challenged library, textbook, and media resources used in the division. Written complaints will be referred to a committee representing the views of the students, parents, teaching staff and supervisory staff and will have among its membership representatives of the committee that originally selected the material in questions. The committee will evaluate the materials and report its finding to the superintendent who shall then render a decision. The complainant will have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Visitors.

Procedures:

The Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind should be responsive to inquiries from the community regarding instructional materials used in the schools.

1. Requests for reconsideration of specific instructional materials shall be directed first to the principal and school librarian to see if the matter can be resolved.
2. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved, the complainant may submit a written request to the superintendent for specific instructional materials to be formally reviewed and reconsidered. During the period of review and reconsideration, parents may request their child not be required to use the specified materials as part of instructional activity.
3. Copies of all materials that are the subject of a complaint shall be made available to the complainant. A refundable deposit shall be required before materials are removed from school premises. The superintendent may pull the material from circulation during the period of review and reconsideration.
4. The complainant shall be referred to a committee representing the views of the students, parents, teaching staff and supervisory staff and having among its membership representatives of the committee that originally selected the material in question. The committee shall evaluate the challenged material in terms of the original criteria for selection and shall invite the complainant to present his views in person to the committee. After having reached a decision, the committee shall report its findings in writing to the superintendent. The committee with report a decision within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 45 instructional days. Documentation of the complaint and the decision will be maintained in the superintendent's files and a copy will be provided to the principal and librarian.
5. If the material has been placed on a school wide restriction, and the committee and superintendent support the restriction, the material will remain restricted indefinitely. Otherwise, the school wide restriction will be lifted immediately.

6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the committee's findings, the complainant may appeal the decision of the committee and the superintendent to the Board of Visitors.

Rescission:

Revised: July 1, 2007; Revised: September 16, 2015
BOV Approved: 12/10/15