



School Committee Policy:

#611

Public Complaints About Instructional Materials/Censorship

The School Committee is responsible for the educational goals of the Maynard Public Schools. The School Committee assigns to the professional staff responsibility for the selection of instructional materials to meet the educational goals. The Committee recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of age-appropriate books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the professional staff to select books and other materials supportive of the school system's educational philosophy and goals. In this policy, "book" means any educational material, including magazine, poster, video, compact disk, film, electronic media and other educational material.

The primary objective of the school library media program is to enrich and support the curriculum, as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association. Materials shall not be excluded because of the race, nationality, political, or religious views of the author. Effort will be made to provide materials that present diverse points of view concerning issues of our times, international, national or local. Materials of sound factual authority shall not be excluded because of partisan issues.

Recognizing that criticism of a book or other material used in the schools may arise, procedures have been developed to insure prompt and fair attention to such issues. This preserves the student's right to learn and the teacher's right to teach. If a parent requests that his/her child not read a specific book, the teacher and/or principal should resolve the situation by arranging to use alternative material. This does not apply, however, to basic program texts.

The Committee will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections but recognizes that at times a re-evaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material restricted or withdrawn from school use:

- a. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to submit a written complaint to the school principal in which he/she will articulate the concern.
- b. If resolution is not reached at the school level, the issue will be referred to an appeals process as outlined in the attached regulation.

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