

Protocol for Responding to Curriculum Challenges Using Policy IJ-R

Background: Arlington School Committee Policy IJ-R articulates APS policy relative to reconsideration of curricular materials. Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas are articulated in this policy. The policy does not specify the process through which reviews will be conducted in the event of a challenge; the purpose of this protocol is to outline an inclusive process for the review of curricular materials that are challenged under Policy IJ-R.

Review Process: It is a priority of the Arlington Public Schools to maintain two-way partnerships with families and the community. The review process articulated below is intended to provide opportunities for public input and thorough review by community members with varied expertise and experience with the challenged materials.

1. Upon receipt of the challenge, the challenge will be acknowledged in writing by the Superintendent or designee.
2. A curriculum review team will be created by the Deputy Superintendent to respond to the specific challenge.
 - a. To the extent possible, the curriculum review team will consist of building administrators, classroom teachers, support staff, parents, and students.
 - b. To the extent possible, the curriculum review team will consist of individuals with a range of relevant perspectives and expertise on the topic that is the subject of the challenge.
3. A public hearing will be held during a full School Committee meeting to hear perspectives from the community on the specific challenge that was submitted. During the hearing, all community members may share their perspectives on the challenged material with the School Committee for consideration by the review team.
 - a. The hearing will be communicated at least 48 hours in advance of the public meeting at which it is taking place;
 - b. Relevant documentation about the curriculum challenge, including curriculum materials under question and the complainant's original message or petition for review, will be included.
4. The curriculum review team will meet between the hearing and the recommendation to consider the feedback, review the materials, and discuss the merits of the challenge. The Deputy Superintendent or designee will capture the findings from the curriculum review team in a memo that will be submitted to the Superintendent.
5. At a subsequent school committee meeting, within 2-4 weeks of the public hearing, the Superintendent will present the memo prepared by the Deputy Superintendent or designee capturing the recommendations from the review team.
6. Based upon the findings and recommendations of the review team, the Superintendent will make a recommendation to the School Committee.
7. The School Committee will vote on the recommendation made by the Superintendent.