SELECTION AND REVIEW OF TEXTBOOKS, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, AND MEDIA MATERIALS

Recognizing the importance of textbooks, instructional materials, and media materials to the successful functioning of an educational system, the Wicomico County Board of Education establishes the following policy for their selection and for handling complaints about them.

Selection of Textbooks and Other Prescribed Instructional Materials

The school system should provide for its students a comprehensive selection of materials and textbooks which support curricular goals and objectives and reflect the needs, varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the divergent student population it serves. The Wicomico County Board of Education encourages the use of textbooks and materials which enlighten, inspire, encourage, instill hope and foster good decision-making, as in comparison to those which discourage, convey a sense of futility or affirm negative or destructive character traits. These materials should also support the values endorsed by the Wicomico County Board of Education.

The selection and review of textbooks and other prescribed instructional materials are the ultimate responsibility of the Board of Education of Wicomico County. The professionals involved in administering the instructional programs of the school system will coordinate the selection process. The appropriate content supervisor will be responsible for forming a review committee of teachers, parents, students and other interested citizens. Their recommendation will be presented to the elementary or secondary director who will submit the choice to the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, superintendent and board for approval. Textbooks and other prescribed instructional materials will be available for public review prior to approval. Teachers or other interested citizens may suggest or request a new textbook.

Selection of Media Materials

The Wicomico County Unified School Library Media Program is designed to support the educational goals of and values endorsed by the Wicomico Public School System by providing a well-balanced and organized collection of materials, resources and equipment. To support this effort fully, appropriate resources that properly and adequately supplement the curriculum must be selected.

Media resources for each school community include a comprehensive, centrally organized collection of carefully selected materials, i.e., books, computer software, videos, films, filmstrips, audio tapes, records, study prints, pictures, transparencies, microfiche, and other print and non-print items.

The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction has the responsibility for the selection of media materials.

Handling of Concerns
Realizing that some textbooks, other instructional materials, and media materials or portions of them may conflict with some individuals' personal or religious beliefs, the Wicomico County Board of Education will attempt to consider each such concern individually. When parents request that their children be excused from reading single works such as short stories, novels, or plays, school personnel may make available alternate selections to accommodate individuals' personal or religious concerns. When such a concern arises, schools should notify the appropriate supervisor.

Whenever schools cannot resolve the concern of parents or other citizens, then a standing committee appointed by the superintendent of schools will hear the concern and make a recommendation to the superintendent for a decision. The decision of the superintendent may be appealed to the county board of education as allowed by state law and regulation.