

MONONA GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Rule 871 (2)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE

It is the district's policy to allow a parent/guardian, district resident, staff member or student to formally challenge instructional materials used in the district's educational program. This policy allows those persons in the school and community who are not directly involved in the selection of materials to make their opinions known.

The most critical component of the reconsideration process is the establishment and maintenance of the committee's credibility in the community. For this purpose, community members are included in the committee's membership. The community should not, therefore, infer that the committee is biased or obligated to uphold prior professional decisions. For this same reason, a community member shall be selected to chair the committee.

The presence of the instructional media specialists and the administrative staff member on the committee will assure continuity from year to year and they will be able to lend their professional knowledge of the selection process. Student members are essential since they are the closest to the student body and will be immediately affected by the decision of the committee.

The complainant shall have an opportunity to make an oral presentation to the committee to expand and elaborate on the complaint. The committee shall listen to the complainant, to those with special knowledge and other interested persons. While listening to these presentations, the committee should be aware of the relevant social pressures that are affecting the situation. Individuals who may try to dominate or impose a decision must not be allowed to do so. Minority viewpoints expressed by groups or individuals must be heard and observers must be made to feel welcome. It is important that the committee create a calm, non-volatile environment in which to deal with a potentially volatile situation. To this end, the complainant shall continuously be kept informed of the progress of the complaint.

The committee shall listen to the views of interested persons before reaching a decision. In deliberating its decision, the committee should remember that the district must be responsive to the needs, tastes and opinions of the community it serves and the school curriculum. Therefore, the committee must distinguish between broad community sentiment and attempts to impose personal standards. The deliberation should concentrate on the appropriateness of the material.

The committee's decision shall be to: (a) retain the material; or, (b) remove the material from the total school environment.

BOARD APPROVAL: October 9, 2002