

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POLICY 2510 AND PROCEDURES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REVIEW, CHALLENGE, AND REMOVAL

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS & INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS

The School Board has the constitutional duty and responsibility to select and provide adequate instructional materials for all students in accordance with Sections 1006.28 and 1006.283, F.S., and the provisions outlined in School Board Policy 2510, *Instructional Materials, School Library/Media Center, and other Educational Materials*. Pursuant to School Board Policy 2510, the Board is responsible for the content of all instructional materials and any other materials used in a classroom, available in a school library/media center, or included on a reading list whether adopted and purchased from the State-adopted instructional materials list, adopted and purchased through the District instructional materials program, or otherwise purchased or made available in the classroom.

In addition, the School Board of Miami-Dade County is committed to ensuring that parents and family members play a pivotal role in the education and development of its students, especially school-aged children. In fact, School Board Policy 2111, *Parent Involvement-A Home-School-District Partnership*, further affirms this commitment and states that “strong, continuing family and community involvement in all aspects of school programs and activities provides support for measurable improvement in student achievement.” It also asserts the promotion and encouragement of a “collaborative environment” in which parents and families are invited to engage in the education of students. With respect to parental, and even community involvement, School Board Policy 2510 further stipulates that “*any parent of a public-school student in the District or resident of Miami-Dade County may contest the Board’s adoption of a specific instructional material.*” “For purposes of this policy, “resident” means a resident of the county who has maintained his/her residence in Florida for the preceding year, has purchased a home that is occupied by him/her as his/her residence, or has established a domicile in Florida pursuant to F.S. 222.17.” Also, as a part of HB 1467, the State Board of Education approved a new rule that will lead to the state annually publishing a list of books and instructional materials that have drawn public objections. The proceeds will provide a standardized reporting mechanism of transparency regarding books and materials and those that have been challenged.

Further, school districts will have to report to the state by June 30 of each year which books were challenged and the rationale for the objections. The Florida Department of Education will then publish a statewide list by August 30 of each year.

A “challenge” was filed with respect to certain reading and/or instructional materials available in a school library/media center collection to afford students the opportunity “to explore the unknown and discover areas of interest and thought not covered by the prescribed curriculum.” This challenge erupted in national controversy because the materials were “reassigned” to another section in the media center. Though the materials remained “accessible” to students, the process and related subsequent actions, raised additional questions regarding the policy, process, and determination made with respect to such actions.

School Board Policy 2510 explicitly outlines procedures regarding challenges or objections regarding non-adopted instructional, library/media center and other educational materials. In fact, it stipulates that challenged materials may be removed from use only after the following informal and formal procedures have been completed in sequence and states that “no challenged material may be removed from the curriculum or from a collection of resource materials solely because it presents ideas that may be unpopular or offensive to some.”

A review of the filing documents challenging the materials and the school-based committee’s report indicates that the challenge may not have fully comported with the criteria set forth in Sections 1006.31(2) or 1006.40(3)(d), F.S. and School Board Policy 2510.

As a result of the aforementioned, as well as other issues regarding ambiguities and inconsistencies in the interpretation and application of School Board Policy 2510, a review of the policy, forms, training and related procedures is prudent.

Thus, this item seeks to direct the Superintendent to review School Board Policy 2510, specifically Section IX regarding objections to non-adopted instructional and library/media center and other educational materials and related procedures governing its implementation; review and consider procedures for notifications to Region, District, and/or School Board regarding objections that result in the reassignment and/or removal of non-adopted instructional and library/media center and other educational materials; initiate rulemaking regarding School Board Policy 2510, where appropriate and necessary; reaffirm communication and related training, where necessary, to schools and relevant staff responsible for processing challenges and objections to non-adopted instructional and library/media center and other educational materials; and provide an update to the School Board no later than August 16, 2023.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida directs the Superintendent to:

1. review School Board Policy 2510, specifically Section IX regarding objections to non-adopted instructional and library/media center and other educational materials and related procedures governing its implementation;
2. review and consider procedures for notifications to Region, District, and/or School Board regarding objections that result in the reassignment and/or removal of non-adopted instructional and library/media center and other educational materials;
3. initiate rulemaking regarding School Board Policy 2510, where appropriate and necessary;
4. reaffirm communication and provide related training, where necessary, to schools and relevant staff responsible for processing challenges and objections to non-adopted instructional and library/media center and other educational materials; and
5. provide an update to the School Board no later than August 16, 2023.