

Frequently Asked Questions about the Supplemental Materials Policy Board Policy and Administrative Regulations 6161.11

Q Do teachers need to get parent permission for everything they read in class?

A The policy states that before using any supplementary literature dealing with any topics that **may be deemed controversial**, principal approval **and** written parent/guardian permission is required. This does not mean everything; however, it is important to be sensitive to the values of our community and the students we serve. The best guidance for teachers is, "When in doubt, get permission."

Q Why can't elementary teachers be exempt from parent permission? Isn't this just a secondary issue?

A There are many picture books that address very controversial topics. This policy allows parents to control when and how their children confront those issues. Some books that are available, particularly for students in grades 4-6, including some Newberry Award winners, have controversial themes. Parent notification and permission are required for these books.

Elementary teachers and principals are expected to follow the policy and regulations as written.

Q What if a parent does not give permission for a student to read a classic novel that I believe every student should read?

A The parent might not agree with your opinion, might believe it is more appropriate for an older student, or would prefer that it be read and discussed at home. You must have parent permission. The standards state what a student should know and be able to do and do not prescribe specific literary works. All of the specified skills, knowledge and genre of writing can be addressed through multiple works. The standards, not specific literary works, define our curriculum.

Q What if I want to show a part of a video that is rated PG-13 or R and I skip the parts that earned the rating?

A You must have principal permission **and** parent/guardian permission to show any part of a video that is not rated G. This includes material which is not rated. In most cases there would not be justification for showing an entire movie to a class, even it is G-rated. It is important to consider the factors specified in the policy prior to using supplementary materials.*

Q What are the criteria for using supplementary materials?

A The criteria include:

- Relevant to curriculum objectives
- Appropriate to students' ages and abilities
- Does not supplant adopted instructional materials
- Use adheres to copyright limits and District regulations

Q If the novel is on the District-approved list, do I still need to have parent permission for students to read it?

A Yes, **if** the novel contains controversial issues. The purpose of the District approved reading list is to avoid repetition in the study of major literary works. This is a tool for articulation and collaboration. All criteria and procedures for parent permission still apply.

*The entire contents of Board Policy and Administrative Regulations 6161.11 can be found on the District website under **Board of Education**.