

SJCSD Library Material Objection Procedures and Guidelines

1. **Introduction.** This document provides guidelines for objecting to library materials. School Board Rule 4.132 sets forth the statutory requirements governing the District's library materials objection procedures and authorizes the Superintendent to adopt implementing procedures and guidelines. These procedures establish the process for reviewing objections to school or classroom library media materials in conformity with Florida Statute 1006.28 (2)(a)2.b. This statute requires the District to provide a process for review of objections to library materials. More particularly, school districts must provide parents and residents with the opportunity to object to library material. Any material made available in a school or classroom library or included in a reading list is objectionable if the material:
 - a. is pornographic or prohibited under Florida Statute 847.012;
 - b. depicts or describes sexual conduct as defined in Florida Statute 847.001(19), unless such material is for a course required by Florida Statutes 1003.46, 1003.42(2)(n)1.g., or 1003.42(2)(n)3., or identified by State Board of Education rule;
 - c. is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material presented; or
 - d. is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which the material is used.
2. **Standing.** Parents or guardians of District public school students and other St. Johns County residents have standing to object to library materials under these procedures.
3. **Time Limits.** For purposes of these procedures, time limits refer to school workdays. All time limits shall be suspended to the extent they fall within the District winter, spring or summer breaks, with the compilation of time resuming on the first day after the break.
4. **First Step - School-Based Objection.** A parent or resident ("Objecting Party") who objects to a book or other material in a school or classroom library shall first notify the principal of that school. The Objecting Party shall submit the Specific Materials Objection form provided by the District in accordance with statutory requirements and Florida Board of Education Rules, which may be obtained from the District website. Within ten (10) school workdays after receipt of the notice, the principal shall notify the Objecting Party in writing or by email of the principal's decision on the objection. In preparation, the principal may consult with one or more members of the school's Media Advisory Committee. If the Objecting Party is not satisfied with the principal's resolution, the Objecting Party may file a district-level objection.

- a. If the principal determines that the material should be removed from their school library, the principal will inform the Superintendent. The Superintendent may assign a formal review to the District Library Material Objection Committee.
5. **District-Level Objection - Requirements.** Within 10 days of the principal's decision, the Objecting Party may file a district-level objection with the Superintendent if not satisfied with the principal's resolution. The Objecting Party shall submit the Specific Materials Objection form provided by the District in accordance with statutory requirements and Florida Board of Education Rules, which may be obtained from the District website. A written argument in support of the complaint shall be filed with the completed form. The written argument must clearly and concisely state the reasons why the material should be removed from the library or otherwise restricted and must be supported by citations to passages from the work or other evidence. The argument should also cite any supporting statute, rule or case law. The superintendent has the authority to remove a title at any time during this process. An objecting party who is not the parent of a student in the SJCS D is limited to one formal objection per month.
6. **Removal or Restriction Pending Resolution.** Within 5 days after an objection is filed under Paragraph 5, a book challenged on the grounds set forth in Paragraphs 1(a) or (b) shall be removed from the library pending final decision on the objection.
7. **District Library Material Objection Committee.** The Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate staff, may appoint a Library Material Objection Committee ("Committee") to review the complaint and recommend its disposition. If the superintendent appoints a committee, it must include parents of students who will have access to such materials. The Deputy Superintendent of Academics (or designee) will chair the Committee. The Superintendent may assign multiple complaints to the Committee. If it becomes necessary, the Superintendent may appoint substitute committee members. The public may attend; however, there will be no public comments.
 - a. **Procedures.** Committee meetings to consider objections shall be publicly noticed and open to the public. The Objecting Party shall have five (5) minutes to address the Committee.
 - b. **Standards and Criteria.** The standards and criteria applicable to the selection and retention of school library materials are listed in Florida Statutes 1006.28(2)(a)2.b. (as set forth in Paragraph 1 above), 1006.28(2)(d)2.c., and 1006.40(3)(d), School Board Rules 4.13 and 4.131, and guidance from the Florida Department of Education. The material shall be removed if the material is pornographic or prohibited under Florida Statute 847.012;

Use of the material shall be discontinued for any grade level or age group for which such use is inappropriate or unsuitable if the material:

- depicts or describes sexual conduct as defined in Florida Statute 847.001(19), unless such material is for a course required by Florida Statutes 1003.46, 1003.42(2)(n)1.g., or 1003.42(2)(n)3., or identified by State Board of Education rule;
- is not suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material presented; or
- is inappropriate for the grade level and age group for which the material is used.

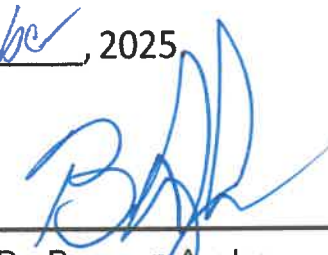
c. **Committee Recommendation.** Within forty-five (45) workdays of the Superintendent's receipt of the complaint, the Committee Chair shall forward the Committee Recommendation to the Superintendent. The recommendation will reflect the majority vote by the committee. In the event of a split decision, the recommendation will be no change to the current availability of the material. Titles will be reviewed one at a time in the order received. When more than one objection is received within forty-five (45) workdays, the response timeline will begin when a prior title objection has been completed. The Committee shall determine whether the challenged material is objectionable under the standards and criteria enumerated in Paragraph 1. The Committee may recommend:

- i. no change to the current availability of the material
- ii. restrict access to the material (examples: grade level, parent approval)
- iii. remove the material from SJCS D libraries

8. **Superintendent's Decision.** If the Superintendent appoints a committee, the decision of the Superintendent shall be communicated by email to the Objecting Party within ten (10) workdays after receipt of the Committee recommendation. The Superintendent's decision to retain, restrict or remove access to a book shall apply consistently throughout the District.

9. **Multiple Objections.** If there is more than one complaint about a material, they may be consolidated by the Superintendent and processed together. If a complaint is filed after an earlier complaint has been processed, the complaint may be denied by the Superintendent unless it states new grounds that were not considered in the initial determination.
10. **Library Material Objection List. School District Reporting Pursuant to Section 1006.28(2), Florida Statutes.** Objections will be submitted annually to the Florida Department of Education, and a link to the FLDOE report will be posted on the district's website.
11. **Appeal.** The Objecting Party may appeal to the School Board the Superintendent's decision to retain or restrict a book. The Objecting Party must submit the appeal to the School Board in writing within ten days of receiving notice of the Superintendent's decision. The School Board will conduct a hearing on the appeal and may hear multiple appeals in a single hearing. If an appeal is not filed in writing within ten days, the Superintendent's decision is final and the objection is resolved.
12. **Request for Appointment of Magistrate.** Pursuant to Florida Statute 1006.28(2)(a)5., a parent who disagrees with the School Board's decision may request the Department of Education to appoint a special magistrate to review the School Board's determination.

ADOPTED this 16th day of October, 2025



Dr. Brennan Asplen
Superintendent of Schools