

From: Leatherman Gary  
Sent: Wednesday, June 09, 2010 5:57 PM  
To: BROWN SHIRLEY  
Cc: Kovach Frank; Todd Carol; Caroline Zucker; Kleinlein Kathy; White Lori; Ferguson Scott; Richert Sharon  
Subject: Textbook challenge documents

Dear Mrs. Brown:

As you requested, I have attached several documents relevant to the challenge filed against the textbook *World History: Patterns of Interaction*, the May 18 meeting of the challenge committee and the appeal of the complainant to the School Board.

The documents provided are as follows:

1. School Board policy regarding challenged instructional materials
2. Complainant challenge form
3. Complainant challenge addendum
4. Challenge Committee credentials
5. Challenge Committee minutes
6. Challenge Committee forms summary
7. Challenge Committee forms individual
8. Publisher's response to challenge
9. Wonder analysis
10. challenge e-mail
11. Challenge committee recommendation
12. Superintendent notice to complainant
13. Complainant appeal

The district supervisor of instructional media and technology organized and facilitated a meeting on May 18 at which the challenge was considered. Minutes were kept during the meeting, but no audio recording was made of the discussions. I attended the meeting and offer my recollections of the proceedings below:

As directed in policy, the committee was asked to review the content of the textbook in question before the committee met to discuss the challenge. Committee members also were asked to submit a form that registered their impressions of the text relative to the challenge (documents 6 and 7).

Following the discussion of the text, the committee reached a preliminary consensus on the major points of the challenge. At that time the committee was provided with additional information (documents 8-10), including a defense of the text by the publisher, an analysis that supported several points in the challenge and an e-mail questioning some of the content of the book.

The committee read those materials and discussed whether the information they provided would alter their consensus regarding the textbook. No one said the ancillary materials affected their individual conclusion.

The committee then agreed to recommend to the superintendent that the textbook was factually accurate and unbiased toward any particular religion. They further recommended that the textbook should continue to be used in world history classes.

In the complainant's appeal, he referred to a comment made by a committee member that the "complaint was valid." Although a comment to that effect was made on one of the forms submitted by a committee member, it was not made during the committee's deliberations and therefore does not appear in the minutes of the meeting.

The complainant also asserted that the committee did not have access to the ancillary material until after the committee meeting, which was not the case. The material was supplied by the district during the committee's deliberations.

Please let me know if I can provide any further information to support the Board's consideration of the complainant's appeal.

Gary Leatherman, Communications Director  
Sarasota County Schools