Board of Education policies

Concerning Trends:
- admin & BOE not following policy
- introduce restrictive BOE policy to censor using vague & legally undefined terms
- remove librarians/classroom teachers from Reconsideration Committees
- increased self-censorship → the objective of censors

Policies to know:
- 0167 - Public Participation in Board Meetings
  what can & can't be said (Rice notification applies)
- 2530 - Materials selection
  how materials are approved for classrooms & libraries
- 9130 - Community complaints
  who can complain & how complaints must be handled
- 6161 - Instructional Services & Resources
  used by some districts instead of 2530/9130

NJ Requirements for Safe & Inclusive Schools
NJ has several laws and DOE regulations that support safe and inclusive schools, dating from 1994. QSAC monitors district compliance.

Legislation & Legal Precedents on Censorship

Right to Read Bill (S3907) - Would prohibit public libraries and public schools from banning or restricting access to certain books

Ratio Bill (S1903) - Would require a certain number of certified school library media specialists to students

Read about legal precedents that support freedom to read, and provide a legal definition of obscenity.

Reporting is Critical
Report harassment to NJ AG:
schooldiscrimination@njcivilrights.gov

How to report censorship:
Role of the school library media specialist:
- Master’s degree training in material selection & collection management
- 360° view of curriculum →your instructional partner
- Search and information professional expert
- Supports students and staff

Reconsideration process best practices:
- Committee convened in response to a **formal, written challenge**
- Clear guidelines in 9130 to remove emotionality
- **Materials remain in use** while under consideration
- Committee members listed in 9130, should include librarian, subject teacher, administrator, student, parent and/or community member
- Thorough **documentation** establishes credibility of committee's work
- Must read **entire book** to fairly assess
- Must consider the needs of **all** students
- Board of Education must acknowledge

Answers to common false narratives and misinformation about books in schools from Rochester Free to Read

**How books enter the school library**
From Martha Hickson

**What’s the problem with content ratings?**
It’s still censorship. From Martha Hickson

**More thoughts on book ratings**
Political scientist Richard Price of Weber State University explains why ratings applied by government entities are unconstitutional.

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