

Policy 1312.2: Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 09/01/1988 | **Last Revised Date:** 08/01/2026 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 08/01/2026

CSBA NOTE: The following policy, accompanying administrative regulation, and exhibit are for complaints concerning the content or use of any existing textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library, and should be revised to reflect district practice. For complaints regarding the sufficiency of instructional materials or textbooks pursuant to Education Code 35186, see AR/E(1)/E(2) 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Pursuant to Education Code 51501, as amended by AB 715 (Ch. 428, Statutes of 2025), instructional materials adopted by the Governing Board are required to be factually accurate, reflect specified curriculum and standards, and be consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship.

For policy related to the selection, evaluation, and prohibited use of individual instructional materials, see BP/AR 6161.1 - Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials, BP 6161.11 - Supplementary Instructional Materials, and BP 6163.1 - Library Media Centers. For more information regarding the adoption of instructional materials, see CSBA's, "Instructional Materials Adoptions: State and local governing board processes, roles, and responsibilities," "Instructional Materials Adoption: Local governing board responsibilities," and "State Roles, Responsibilities, and Process for Instructional Materials Adoption," and the California Attorney General's, "Guidance to School Officials re: Legal Requirements for Providing Inclusive Curricula and Books."

The State Board of Education's (SBE), "Guidance for Local Instructional Materials Adoptions," provides guidance for districts when identifying, reviewing, piloting, and adopting instructional materials in all content areas, including links to current legislation, sample timelines, support for student groups, and implementation considerations.

In adopting textbooks and other instructional materials for use in district schools, the Governing Board uses a comprehensive process that includes opportunities for the involvement of district staff, parents/guardians, and community members, and, as appropriate, students. In accordance with law, textbooks and instructional materials adopted for district use shall be factually accurate, aligned with adopted curriculum and standards described in law, and consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship.

Complaints concerning the content or use of instructional materials, including textbooks, supplementary instructional materials, library materials, or other instructional materials and equipment, shall be investigated and addressed in accordance with this Board policy and accompanying administrative regulation. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding instructional materials with their student's teacher and/or the school principal. If the situation remains unresolved, a complaint may be filed using the process specified in the accompanying administrative regulation and exhibit.

The district shall accept complaints concerning instructional materials only from staff, district residents, or the parents/guardians of students enrolled in a district school. (Education Code 35160)

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 243 clarifies when it is unlawful discrimination for the Board to (1) refuse to approve the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library, or (2) prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library. The Board may not refuse to approve such use on the basis that the material includes a study of the role and contributions of specified individuals or groups, unless the study of the role and contributions reflects adversely upon legally protected groups. Additionally, the Board may not prohibit such use on the basis that the study of the role and contributions contain inclusive or diverse perspectives. In addition, pursuant to Education Code 244 the Board is prohibited from adopting or approving the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use of the textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code 220.

Complaints alleging discrimination based on a violation of Education Code 243 or 244 may be brought under the district's uniform complaint procedures or may be filed directly with the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). Complaints that are filed directly with the SPI are required to identify the basis for doing so, and present evidence that supports the basis for the direct filing. In such cases, the SPI may directly intervene without waiting for an investigation by the district. See BP/AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Policy 1312.2: Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 11/05/2008 | **Last Revised Date:** 06/28/2017 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 06/28/2017

The Board of Education uses a comprehensive process to adopt district instructional materials that is based on selection criteria established by law and Board policy and includes opportunities for the involvement of parents/guardians and community members. Complaints concerning the content or use of instructional materials, including textbooks, supplementary instructional materials, library materials, or other instructional materials and equipment, shall be properly and fairly considered using established complaint procedures.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding instructional materials with their child's teacher and/or the school principal. If the situation remains unresolved, a complaint may be filed using the process specified in the administrative regulation.

The district shall accept complaints concerning instructional materials only from staff, district residents, or the parents/guardians of children enrolled in a district school.

When deliberating upon challenged materials, the Superintendent and/or review committee shall consider the educational philosophy of the district, the professional opinions of teachers of the subject and of other competent authorities, reviews of the materials by reputable bodies, the teacher's stated objectives in using the materials, community standards, and the objections of the complainant.

Complainants are encouraged to accept the Superintendent's or review committee's decision. However, if the complainant finds that decision unsatisfactory, he/she may appeal the decision to the Board.

The district's decision shall be based on educational suitability of the materials and the criteria established in Board policy and administrative regulation.

When any challenged instructional material is reviewed by the district, it shall not be subject to further reconsideration for 12 months, unless the Superintendent determines that reconsideration is warranted.

Complaints related to sufficiency of textbooks or instructional materials shall be resolved pursuant to the district's Williams uniform complaint procedure at AR 1312.4.

Pursuant to Education Code 60151, a district that is determined by the SPI to have violated Education Code 244 is required to be assessed a financial penalty, the calculation of which is specified in Education Code 60151, as amended by AB 121 (Ch. 8, Statutes of 2025), and may be subject to other corrective action as specified in Education Code 60151.

However, a complaint alleging discriminatory bias in instructional materials or related to the use or prohibited use of any existing textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library that alleges unlawful discrimination based on a violation of Education Code 243 or 244 shall be filed, investigated, and resolved in accordance with Board Policy 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.

CSBA NOTE: SBE's, "Guidance for Local Instructional Materials Adoptions," provides guidance regarding how to review instructional materials to ensure that they represent diverse perspectives and are culturally relevant.

Additionally, the Attorney General's, "Guidance to School Officials re: Legal Requirements for Providing Inclusive Curricula and Books," provides guidance to districts regarding the obligation to provide curricula, instructional materials, and books that are inclusive and reflect the roles and contributions of our diverse population.

When deliberating upon challenged materials, the Superintendent, or any designee or committee established by the Superintendent to review the materials, shall consider the degree to which the materials align with the criteria for instructional materials as specified in law, Board policy, and administrative regulation. Additionally, such deliberations may consider the educational philosophy and vision of the district; the educational suitability of the materials including the manner in which the materials support the curriculum and appropriateness for the student's age; the professional opinions of teachers of the subject and of other competent authorities and/or experts; reviews of the materials by reputable bodies; the stated objectives in using the materials; community standards; the allegations in the complaint, including the extent to which the objections are based on the dislike of ideas contained in the materials; and the impact that keeping or removing the materials would have on student well-being.

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 243 clarifies that it is unlawful discrimination for the Board to prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library on the basis that it contains inclusive or diverse perspectives. Additionally, Education Code 244 prohibits the Board from adopting or approving the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code 220.

While Education Code 243 and 244 are specifically applicable to boards, districts should assume that any similar decision by the Superintendent, designee, or any committee established by the Superintendent would likely constitute unlawful discrimination as well; see BP 6161.1 - Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials.

The Superintendent, or any designee or committee established by the Superintendent to review the materials, shall not prohibit the continued use of an appropriately adopted textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library on the basis that it contains inclusive and/or diverse perspectives, as specified in Education Code 243.

Additionally, the Superintendent, or any designee or committee established by the Superintendent to review the materials, shall not authorize the continued use of an adopted textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code 220.

If the complainant finds the Superintendent's or review committee's decision unsatisfactory, the complainant may appeal the decision to the Board.

CSBA NOTE: The following optional paragraph limits reconsideration within a specified time period and should be modified to reflect district practice.

Any challenged instructional material that is reviewed by the district shall not be subject to further reconsideration for 12 months, unless required by law.

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 35186 details a specific process that districts are required to use to resolve complaints regarding sufficiency/availability of instructional materials or textbooks. For more information regarding the process to resolve complaints regarding the sufficiency of instructional materials or textbooks, see AR/E(1)/E(2) 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Pursuant to Education Code 60119, boards are required to hold a public hearing annually regarding the sufficiency of instructional materials. If, at the public hearing, the Board makes a determination of "insufficient materials," Education Code 1240 and 60119 require the Board to take certain actions and specifies potential consequences for not remedying the deficiency as required by law; see BP 6161.1 - Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials.

Complaints related to the sufficiency of textbooks or instructional materials shall be resolved as specified in Administrative Regulation 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures.
