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DPI QUICK NOTE



#8

INTELLECTUAL

FREEDOM

AND

PERSONAL BOOKS

IOWA DEPARTMENT
OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
1986

DPI QUICK NOTE 8

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM
AND PERSONAL BOOKS

At the University of Northern Iowa Library Science Department the question was asked, "what is the legal position of a school or district if a teacher's personally owned instructional materials are challenged?"

The question does not seem to fit within board policy. Boards would need to consider the situation carefully before taking any action because of the teacher's academic freedom. One point to consider might be whether it is ethical for teachers to use materials not approved by the board. Since the materials used are not generally text books, this may be less valid.

1. A board should make a decision, taking the teacher's academic freedom into account.
2. If the teacher agrees, an ad hoc procedure similar to the official one could be used.

3. If the teacher does not consent to use such a procedure, the board should determine the material is patently inappropriate before telling the teacher not to use the material. Boards have more control over school property than individual property.

4. If the teacher refuses to let the board examine the material, the board can direct the teacher not to use it.

Reprinted from:
Growth Notes for
School Media Specialists
Instruction & Curriculum
Division
Iowa Department of Public
Instruction
1986