

EXCEPTIONS TO USE OF SPECIFIC COURSE MATERIALS

The curriculum and course materials of the Merrimack School District are designed to meet statutory requirements and include other areas of study deemed appropriate by the professional staff and the Board.

The Board acknowledges that from time to time individual students may be exposed to specific course material(s) which their parents/legal guardians may find objectionable. In such cases, the parents/legal guardians may request an exception to the specific course material(s) in accordance with applicable law and the following procedure.

1. The parents/legal guardians must:
 - a. Notify the building principal in writing of the specific course material(s) to which they object; and
 - b. Provide a detailed written description or actual copy of the course material(s) which they propose as an alternative to the district's course material(s). That alternative material(s) must meet applicable state requirements for education in the particular subject area.
 - c. Provide a detailed description of how and when the alternative course material(s) will be delivered to the child at no cost to the District. The school district shall have no responsibility for delivery of the alternative course material(s).
2. The building principal shall review both the proposed alternative course material(s) and the plan for delivery of the material(s), as submitted by the parents/legal guardians. Upon review, the principal will determine whether the proposal is appropriate and meets state requirements and will determine the appropriate assessment to be utilized to demonstrate successful completion of the alternative course material(s). In addition, he/she will consult with the classroom teacher and other staff as appropriate.
3. The building principal shall notify the parents/legal guardians as soon as practicable whether or not he/she approves the alternative course material(s) and the plan for delivery of the material(s), as submitted by the parents/legal guardians. The building principal shall also inform the parents/legal guardians of the assessment and documentation that will be required to demonstrate successful completion of the alternative course material(s). Both the building principal and parents/legal guardians must agree in order for particular alternative course material(s) to be approved as a replacement for district course material(s). The building principal will work with the parents/legal guardians to reach agreement on the alternative course material(s) and plan for delivery.

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(continued)

4. Once the alternative course material(s) and the plan for delivery have been approved by the building principal and approved by the parents/legal guardians, the parents/legal guardians, unless otherwise agreed to, assume responsibility to provide appropriate documentation of the student's successful completion of the material(s). Absent such documentation, the student will not receive credit for the work.
5. If the building principal and parents/legal guardians cannot agree on alternative course material(s) and a plan for their delivery, the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent may be requested to assist in resolving the matter. In the event that there is no agreement, the district shall expect the child to continue to participate in the school's regular curriculum.
6. In the event that the parents/legal guardians object to sex education or health programs on religious grounds, the student shall not be required to participate in the district's regular curriculum, but may participate in an alternative program. See Health Education and Exemption from Instruction Policy—Opt-Out Procedure and Form.
7. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as giving the parents/legal guardians the right to appeal to the school board.

In accordance with State law, the names of the parents/legal guardians requesting exceptions to specific course material(s), and their reasons for doing so, shall remain confidential.

Legal Reference:

- RSA 186:11(IX-b) and (IX-c)

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