

HOUSE BILL 2321

By Casada

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4 and  
Title 49, relative to textbooks.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 22, is amended by  
adding the following as a new section:

49-6-2210.

(a)

(1) A local board of education shall appoint content review committees during each adoption cycle for the subject areas or grade levels in which textbooks are to be adopted to advise the local board on the content of textbooks proposed for adoption. Persons residing in the school district shall be eligible for appointment to a content review committee. Persons desiring to be appointed to a committee shall apply in writing to the local board. The local board shall provide a reasonable period of time in which persons desiring to serve may submit applications for service on a committee and in which it will accept applications. The local board shall appoint any person who submits an application and who resides in the school district to serve; provided, that the person complies with subsection (h).

(2) Members of content review committees shall serve for two (2) years.

(3) The department of education, as appropriate and when requested, shall assist LEAs in recruiting of content review committees.

(4) Each LEA shall publicize the content review committees in its district. An LEA shall post a notice on its web site of the opportunity for service on a content review committee and may make publication of the opportunity for service in any other manner deemed appropriate by it.

The goal of this notification is to make as many citizens as possible in the LEA aware of the content review committees and their tasks.

(b) The content review committees may be composed of teachers in the subject area or grade level for which textbooks are to be adopted, professors or instructors at universities or colleges who teach in the subject area, parents or community volunteers.

(c)

(1) Content review committees shall not be responsible for determining whether the textbooks meet the curriculum standards of the state board of education. Content review committees shall solely judge the textbooks on the accuracy and appropriateness of the content for the subject area and grade level for which the textbook is intended.

(2) A local board of education may reject a textbook based on the analysis of the content review committee for that grade level and subject. If the local board rejects all textbooks on the commission's list for a grade level and subject based on the analysis of the content review committee, then, notwithstanding the prohibition in § 49-6-2206 on the use of textbooks to the exclusion of textbooks on the commission's list, the local board may adopt any textbook it finds appropriate for that grade level and subject without applying to the commissioner for the waiver required under § 49-6-2207.

(d) The department of education may develop training seminars for members of content review committees to assist the members in providing

quality content reviews of the textbooks assigned to them. These seminars may be provided by webinar or, if the department finds webinars to be impractical, through in-person training conducted in multiple locations throughout the state.

(e)

(1) A textbook proposed for adoption shall be reviewed by at least two (2) reviewers of a content review committee. Every member of a content review committee shall be assigned at least one (1) textbook to review.

(2) The department may develop templates for reviewing textbooks. The templates may differ for subject areas or grade levels. If the department develops a template for a specific subject area and grade level, then a member of the content review committee for that subject area and grade level shall complete the review template for each textbook assigned to that member.

(3) The department shall develop a process by which the members of the content review committees may submit their reviews to the department for posting on the department's web site. The department shall accept reviews submitted electronically or in writing. The reviews completed by a member of a committee shall be posted on the department's web site without identifying the member completing them. However, the members of content review committees may be identified on the LEA's web site.

(f) Each content review committee member shall submit to the local textbook selection committee appointed under § 49-6-2206(c) a paper copy of the member's recommendations. The local textbook selection committee shall

consider these recommendations in making its recommendations to the local board of education.

(g) Members of content review committees shall serve voluntarily and shall receive no compensation for their service.

(h) Prior to service on a content review committee, a person shall:

(1) Subscribe to the oath set out in § 49-6-2201(f). The oath shall be administered by the county mayor of the county in which the person resides or by some authorized official empowered to administer an oath. The official administering the oath shall notify the department in writing that the oath was administered and the date on which the oath was administered; and

(2) Agree to abide by the LEA's code of ethics. The agreement shall be in writing and signed by the person seeking to serve on a content review committee.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to reviews of textbooks to be adopted by LEAs during the spring of 2016 and in subsequent adoption cycles.