

**Policy Number:**

**361.2**

**Title:**

**Library Materials Selection**

The primary objective of the school's library media center (LMC) is to support students' growth academically, emotionally, and socially. It is the duty of the center to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal, and the presentation of different points of view.

The School Board delegates the review and selection of LMC materials and resources to the certified library media specialist employed by the school district. The library media specialist will select materials in accordance with this policy with the cooperation of principals and teachers, and giving due consideration to acquisition suggestions made by staff and students. Within Board-approved budgetary allocations for acquisitions and subscriptions in any school year, specific acquisitions/subscriptions that have been through the review/selection process and approved by the District Administrator or the relevant building principal may be submitted as purchase orders using established District purchasing procedures. Offers to donate LMC materials shall go through the review and approval process prior to acceptance.

#### **OBJECTIVES FOR SELECTION**

LMC materials and resources of varying types and formats shall be selected and maintained primarily to help students:

- pursue the District's curriculum, academic standards and educational goals taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served
- access materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards
- become more informed and responsible members of the community
- engage with materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens, under guidance, may develop the practice of critical analysis;
- understand and appreciate the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of society in the United States and around the globe
- develop their creative capacities
- use discretionary time constructively and enjoyably

The Board further directs staff who are involved in the selection of LMC materials to give consideration to the following additional goals and standards, some of which draw on principles stated in the American Association for School Libraries "Library Bill of Rights":

- To provide a comprehensive collection of materials which will implement, enrich, support and extend the curriculum and encompass the varied interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds and maturity levels of the students.
- To provide materials which will stimulate growth in the areas of factual knowledge, critical thinking, literary appreciation and aesthetic values.
- To provide materials representative of the contributions of all people, regardless of age, sex, religion, ethnic or cultural origin.
- To provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
- To provide materials on controversial issues which will enable students to develop, under guidance, critical analysis of media.
- To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection of materials for all students.
- To provide a wide range of materials for all levels of learners

## **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

When selecting LMC materials to serve one or more of the goals identified above, consideration shall be given to a variety of factors, including but not limited to the following:

- budgetary considerations;
- an item's relationship to the existing collection, including especially the need for added materials in particular subject areas or within particular categories of literature, or the need to replace a resource that was damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen;
- the extent to which materials would support and enhance the District's curriculum and educational programs, as identified with the input of instructional staff;
- the extent to which an item is judged to be of contemporary significance and/or of likely lasting value within the District's collection;
- an evaluation of the item in relation to the intended audience for the item;
- the accessibility of the materials to individuals requiring special formats (e.g., certain students with disabilities and English language learners);
- the extent to which an item is judged to meet present and anticipated user needs and interests;
- an evaluation of the item/material, especially reference materials and non-fiction works, for improper bias, misinformation, or stereotyping;
- the physical limitations of school facilities; and
- the availability of the material or substantially similar material through other in-District sources, through area libraries, through interlibrary loan, or through other reasonably accessible sources, including electronic sources

- favorable reviews in standard selection sources (i.e. Booklist, School Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, and other reputable review sources)

## **CRITERIA FOR WITHDRAWAL**

Selection is an ongoing process and responsibility of the library media specialist, which includes the removal of material no longer deemed appropriate or accurate and the replacement of lost and worn materials that are still of educational value. Criteria for the withdrawal of resources may include:

- Failure to meet the District's legal obligations or satisfy the District's current selection criteria and standards (e.g., regarding discriminatory/harmful bias or stereotyping or having inaccurate or obsolete information)
- No longer useful for curricular support or recreational reading
- Not circulated, or very rarely circulated, for a number of years
- Take up valuable space on crowded shelves
- In poor physical condition

Decisions by the library media specialist or any authorized administrator to remove or relocate LMC materials are to be based on the District's policies, standards, and instructional/program goals. District personnel shall **not** remove/relocate or recommend the removal or relocation of any LMC resource based upon their personal disagreement with or personal objection to the ideas, opinions, or perspectives presented in the resource or due to any preferences of non-District persons or groups.

When the decision is made to withdraw a book and the weeding process is over, library records and the material must clearly indicate that the item/resource is removed from the library collection.

## **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

The Board recognizes that occasional objections to LMC materials may occur despite the quality of the selection process. When parents or guardians or other individuals have concerns about particular LMC materials, these concerns shall be brought forward in accordance with the procedures below, carefully considered, and accorded the courtesy of a prompt reply by appropriate school personnel.

Challenges seeking the removal or other reconsideration of classroom texts or other classroom instructional materials shall also be brought and processed in accordance with the procedures set forth below.

Notwithstanding the reconsideration procedures set forth below, the District may redirect a complaint seeking reconsideration of materials to a different District process for resolution to the extent doing so may be required by law (e.g., for a complaint that alleges unlawful sex discrimination under Title IX).

A. A staff member, the parent/guardian of a District student, a District student (with notice to a parent/guardian if the student is a minor), or resident of the District may register criticism of material with the building principal or the building library media specialist or teacher at which time the material in question will be discussed by the complainant, principal, and librarian and/or teacher.

1. An effort to informally resolve the concern shall be made first. An informal resolution may include approving an individualized accommodation (such as an alternative reading, project, or assignment).

2. If the concern is not resolved informally, following the meeting all criticism shall be documented in writing using the "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional and Library Materials" form. The parent/guardian of a minor student must consent to a minor student's pursuit of any such complaint.

3. The statement shall be signed and appropriate contact information given which will allow proper replies to be made. To the extent the District receives a complaint/request that is anonymous or that has been submitted by someone other than a staff member, student, parent/guardian, or District resident, the District reserves discretion to decline to process the matter using these procedures and to either dismiss the complaint/request or address the concerns using other procedures.

4. The person or persons registering a complaint will be given a copy of the Library Materials Selection Policy (361.2) accepted by the Board of Education.

B. The form shall be given to the building principal who will inform the District Administrator. The District Administrator shall appoint a review committee consisting of the following: a school library media specialist, the Director of Teaching and Learning, the school principal, and two teachers for the appropriate grade level or subject area. As an exception to the review committee procedure, if the District concludes that a reconsideration complaint/statement is redundant to a previous request in which a relevant resource was thoroughly reviewed and evaluated for substantially similar reasons, the District may inform the complainant that the District is choosing to rely on the previous evaluation and that the complainant may immediately appeal the decision to the School Board, as identified below.

1. The administrator selecting the Committee members shall designate one person as the chairperson and presiding officer of the Committee.

2. As scheduled by the chairperson, the meeting(s) of the Materials Review Committee will be conducted in compliance with the Open Meetings Law, including ensuring appropriate public notice of the committee's meetings.

C. The review committee shall within 20 working days, unless the District Administrator approves an extension with notice of the extension to the Complainant, take the following steps:

1. Read and examine the materials to an extent appropriate considering the nature and scope of the materials and the basis of the complaint.
2. Check for general acceptance of the materials by reading any available reviews.
3. Weigh values and faults against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages pulled out of context, applying the District's established goals and criteria.
4. Meet to discuss the material.
5. Prepare a written statement/recommendation to be submitted to the District Administrator.

D. After reviewing the written statement/recommendation of the committee, the District Administrator shall determine the matter and notify the complainant of the administrative decision.

1. The complainant may appeal the decision of the District Administrator to the Board of Education within ten days of receipt of the District Administrator's decision.
2. Upon an appeal, the Board of Education shall review the administrative decision and other information that is relevant to the complaint and appeal at a Board meeting. The Board may decide the appeal with or without requesting additional information and with or without requesting/permitting appearances by the complainant or by District personnel. The Board's decision is the final District decision.
3. To the extent the complaint had alleged that the challenged LMC materials violate the state student nondiscrimination laws, this reconsideration process may serve as the applicable District complaint procedure, and the notice of the final District decision shall also inform the complainant of the right to appeal an adverse determination of the complaint to the State Superintendent within 30 days and of the Chapter PI 1 procedures for making the appeal.

E. Circulation/use of challenged materials normally will not be restricted during reconsideration proceedings; however, requests of individual parents for alternative materials or an alternative assignment for their child will generally be honored without penalty, as further outlined above. Any decision to more broadly remove or restrict access to challenged materials on an interim basis during reconsideration proceedings must be approved by the District Administrator.

The District shall not unlawfully discriminate in the selection and evaluation of library media materials or resources on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, any physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other legally-protected status or classification. Discrimination complaints shall be processed in accordance with established District procedures.

LEG REF: Wisconsin Statutes Sections §115.77, §118.13, §118.15(1)(d) to (e), §121.02(1)(h)

Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 8.01(2)(h), PI 9.03(1)(e)

Federal Laws and Regulations Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Assistive Technology Act of 1998

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