

SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS – Administrative Guidelines

A. Objectives of Selection:

The main objective of the school's library media center (LMC) is to implement, enhance, and support the instructional program of the district. It is the obligation of the LMC to provide a range of materials at varying levels of difficulty, with a varying range of appeal, and presenting varying points of view.

To this end, the Shiocton School District reaffirms the objectives of the Standards for School Library Media Programs of the American Association of School Librarians and the Department of Audiovisual Instruction, which asserts that the responsibility of the library media center is:

To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum taking into consideration the varied interest, abilities and maturity levels of the pupils served.

To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily life.

To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

To provide information in a variety of formats to accommodate the varied abilities, interests, and needs of the students.

To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

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 appropriate for the users of the library.

*The School District shall not discriminate in the selection and evaluation of instructional and library materials on the basis of sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

Additionally, to provide a variety of selections that satisfy the personal interests and recreational reading needs of the students enrolled in the Shiocton School District.

B. Responsibility for Selection of Materials:

The Shiocton Board of Education is legally responsible for all materials relating to the operation of the Shiocton School District. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school system.

Recommendations for instructional materials may come from several sources: administrators, teachers, students, district personnel and community, as appropriate. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of instructional materials, recommending materials for purchase, and maintaining qualitative standards in the selection process rests with the professionally trained media personnel.

C. Criteria for Selection of Instructional Materials:

1. General Criteria

- a. Curriculum needs of the school and of the existing collection are given first consideration.
- b. Materials are selected for a reason and purpose. They are evaluated as to their aesthetic, literary, and social value; appropriateness to student age and emotional maturity; and relevance to the curriculum.
- c. Selection of materials on political theory and ideology, religion, and controversial topics is directed toward maintaining a balanced representation of views so that young people may develop the practice of critical thinking.
- d. Materials representing varying viewpoints may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives.
- e. Each work will be evaluated on the basis of its literary quality, its accuracy, and its relevance to the curriculum. Use of profanity or sexual incidents in a literary work will not automatically disqualify it from consideration for inclusion in the collection.
- f. Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.
- g. Physical format and appearance of materials shall be suitable for their intended use.
- h. In all cases, decisions shall be made on the basis of whether the material presents life in its true proportions, whether circumstances are realistically dealt with, and/or whether the material has literary or social value.

2. Specific Criteria

The following criteria are strong considerations when evaluating materials for possible selection. They can be applied either when examining materials on preview or when selecting through the use of reviewing tools.

- a. **Authority** - the qualifications and reputation of the persons responsible for the creation of the material.
- b. **Scope** - overall purpose, importance, and coverage of the material.
- c. **Format and Technical Quality** - format appropriate to subject matter; production standards evident.
- d. **Authenticity** - validity, reliability, and completeness of the materials as well as the degree of bias or objectivity. Accuracy and timelines are considered.
- e. **Treatment and arrangement** - readable, clearly written, and logically developed. Materials possesses popular appeal.
- f. **Aesthetics** - appeal to the imagination, senses, and intelligence to develop artistic appreciation.
- g. **Price** - value of selections in comparison to existing budget limitations and other selection priorities.
- h. **Suitability** - value of selections in relation to the existing collection, patron usage, and appropriations to the school's curriculum.
- i. **Special features** - special characteristics of one material that may be absent from others on the same subject.
- j. **Requests** - may come from administrators, teachers, district personnel, students and other community members, as appropriate.

D. Procedures for Selection:

1. Selection of materials will be made by professionally trained media personnel through reading, viewing, listening, or examining materials first hand or by the use of reputable, unbiased selection aids. The assistance and cooperation of administrators, teachers, district personnel, students, and other community members are enlisted. Final decisions will be based on selection criteria listed in Section C.
2. Gift materials are judged on the selection criteria listed in Section C and are accepted or rejected for inclusion by those criteria.
3. Materials acquired through an ongoing subscription are examined annually and are continued only if they fulfill a definite need.
4. Multiple items of outstanding and much-in-demand materials are purchased as needed.

5. An annual review of the collection will be made to weed out obsolete material. The collection will be evaluated in relation to changing curriculum, new teaching methods, and current needs of teachers and students. Appropriate materials will be obtained. This process will also lead to the replacement of outmoded materials with those which are up-to-date and the discarding of materials that are no longer useful.
6. Salesmen must report to the office and receive permission before meeting with the media specialist.

E. Challenged Materials:

Occasionally objections to a selection may be made despite the care taken to select valuable materials for student and teacher use. Any resident or employee of Shiocton School District may raise objection to the instructional materials used in the district's educational program.

1. The following basic considerations should be used as guidelines if an objection is registered:
 - a. Establishing an individual channel of communication with the school;
 - b. Protecting the right of the parent to guide the education of his/her own child;
 - c. Protecting other children's rights to participate in educational experiences over the objections of a single individual or group.
2. To facilitate these considerations, the following procedure is suggested for dealing with any type of complaint that may arise over educational materials.
 - a. The individual who is registering the complaint with school personnel is requested to complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Material" form.
 - b. The individual who is registering the complaint will be given a copy of the "Selection of Instructional Materials-Administrative Guidelines."
 - c. The material under consideration shall not be restricted during the reconsideration procedure; however, requests of individual parents for their child will be honored.
 - d. The complaint shall be forwarded to the District Administrator who shall appoint a review committee consisting of the following:
 1. Media specialist;
 2. The building principal;
 3. Teacher(s) from the appropriate grade level and subject area, when applicable;
 4. Three students selected from the Student Council;
 5. Three members from the community.

- e. The review committee will review the complaint, read the challenged material(s) in its entirety, and make a written recommendation to the District Administrator.
- f. After reviewing the written statement/recommendation of the review committee, the District Administrator shall notify the complainant of the decision.
- g. A complainant, who is not satisfied with the decision, may appeal that decision to the Board of Education within ten days of receipt of the review committee and District Administrator's decision. The Board of Education will study the findings of the review committee and the District Administrator. The Board of Education will render a final decision.

This procedural statement is a combination of ideas taken from: National Council of Teachers of English, NCTE Plan for handling complaints; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Model Policy and Rules for the Selection of Instructional Media; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Dealing with Selection and Censorship; American Association of School Librarians, Policies for Selection of Instructional Materials; Appleton Area School District, Educational Materials Selection Policy; and New London School District, Policy for Selection of Educational Materials.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL

Author _____ Format of Material _____

Title _____

Publisher/Producer _____

Request initiated by _____ Telephone () _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Complaint represents:

_____ Himself/Herself

_____ (Name of organization) _____

_____ (Identify other group) _____

1. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific)

2. In your opinion, what harmful effects might students experience as the result of use of this material?

3. Did you review the entire material? Yes _____ No _____

4. Do you perceive any educational value resulting from the use of this material?

5. Is there any age group of students for whom you would recommend this material?

6. Is there any material on a similar subject that you would recommend as substitute for the material in question?

7. What would you like the school to do about this material?

_____ Do not circulate it to my child

_____ Withdraw it from all students as well as from my child

_____ Other _____

8. Do you wish to make an oral presentation before the review committee?

_____ Yes _____ No

Signature _____ Date _____

Library Bill of Rights

The American Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948
Amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967 and January 23, 1980
By the ALA Council