



606.1 SELECTION OF MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for selection of school library media center materials. This policy is intended to apply to all community members, parents, concerned citizens, students, and staff.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Freedoms of inquiry and access to information are fundamental to the development of our society and are the rights of all students. Any abridgement of those rights is solely between an individual student and the parent(s) of the student. The promotion of intellectual inquiry and comprehensive information shall govern the selection of school library media center materials. The term "materials" refers to any material(s) with instructional or recreational function in a media collection. Materials may include both print and nonprint material. The term "selection" refers to the ongoing process of evaluating and acquiring materials; removing materials which are no longer appropriate, due to low use, outdated references, educational suitability, age or condition and replacement of materials which are lost or damaged.

School library media center materials should support and enrich the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles and maturity levels of students served. School library media center materials should stimulate growth in factual knowledge, critical analysis of differing sides of issues, literary appreciation, esthetic values and recognition of various societal values.

The responsibility for the selection and purchase of school library media center materials rests with the School Board, which delegates the authority to implement this policy to the administration. When selecting materials, the media specialists will apply one or more of the following:

1. Evaluate the existing materials;
2. Assess curriculum and individual student needs;
3. Examine the materials being considered;
4. Consult reputable, professionally prepared reviews;
5. Consult qualified personnel; and
6. Out-of-date materials or no longer useful are withdrawn from the collection.

Donated materials should be subjected to the same examination and should be accepted or rejected accordingly.

The South Washington County Schools believe in the principles of intellectual freedom, as stated in its Textbooks and Instructional Materials Selection Policy 606. Any resident, employee, or parent in District 833 may express concerns about instructional materials in the district's educational program. Whenever a concern is expressed, District 833 will respond with a defined procedure approved by the school board.

III. PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF SELECTION

In order to implement the policy stated above, the following objectives and guiding principles are adopted for selecting and reviewing media center resources:

1. Materials should be selected which meet the needs, interests, abilities, and maturity level of students;
2. Materials should be selected which represent a diversity of views and expression in order to promote critical thinking and objective evaluation under professional guidance.
3. Selection of a work does not constitute agreement with the content;
4. Materials should, as far as possible, accurately reflect contributions and achievement of women and men, as well as individuals and groups of various racial, social, ethnic, and religious backgrounds;
5. Materials selected should be of the highest quality appropriate to the level of students while considering curriculum objectives and availability of materials;
6. Materials selected should be considered by the impact of each work as a whole--not a part. Few works are totally perfect; works containing a single flaw, flawed passage, or a number of flawed passages are not necessarily works of poor quality;
7. Materials should be considered on the basis of reason and principle rather than personal opinion and bias.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The responsibility for the selection of materials is delegated by the administrator to the professionally trained and appropriately licensed school library media specialist employed by the school district.

V. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Materials for purchase are considered on the basis of overall purpose, timeliness, or permanence, importance of the subject matter, quality of the writing/production, readability and popular appeal, authoritativeness, reputation of the publisher/producer, reputation and significance of the author/artist/composer/producer, etc., and format and price. Requests from faculty and students are given high priority.

It should be understood that selection is an ongoing process which should include the replacement of lost or worn materials still of educational value.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR CHALLENGES OF MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

The right of any individual to free access to materials is basic to a democratic society and to the educational growth of its members. The individual who has access to all material is freed from the bonds of discovering all things, facts, and truths through the narrow confines of his or her own direct experience.

In spite of this, occasional objections to media center materials will be made. The School Board supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and expressed in the "Library Bill of Rights" of the American Library Association, "The Right to Read" published by the National Council of Teachers of English, and "The Freedom to View" written by the Educational Film Library Association. In the event that media center materials are questioned, the principles of intellectual freedom, the right to access to materials, and the integrity of the licensed staff must be upheld while reevaluating the material in question.

When media center materials are challenged, a School Board approved procedure will be initiated. Challenged media center materials will be carefully reviewed in the light of specific objections which have been raised. The administrator may schedule an initial meeting with the complainant to discuss their concern, to explain the "PROCEDURES FOR CHALLENGES OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS," and to provide complainant with the "CITIZEN REQUEST FOR CHALLENGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS" form (please refer to Policy #606 for these). Copies will be sent to the Media Specialist, and the Superintendent. The materials in question will continue to be available for use in the Library Media Center during the reconsideration process.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 9 (Compulsory Instruction - Curriculum)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 2 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)
- Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subd. 8 (School Board Responsibilities)
- Minn. Stat. § 124D.59-124D.61 (Limited English Proficiency)
- Minn. Stat. § 127A.10 (State Officials and School Board Members to be Disinterested; Penalty)
- Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260, 108 S.Ct. 562, 98 L.Ed.2d 592 (1988)
- Board of Educ. v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 589, 875 S.Ct. 675, 17 L.Ed. 2d 629 (1967)
- Pratt v. Independent Sch. Dist, No. 831, 670 F.2d 771 (8th Cir. 1982)
- Webster v. New Lenox Sch. Dist., 917 F.2d 1004 (7th Cir. 1990)

Cross References:

- 833 Policy 606 (TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS)

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