

TITLE: Library and Instructional Materials Selection, Public Concerns & Complaints CODE: IJK

The School Board delegates to the Superintendent and his/her designees the authority for the selection of library and instructional materials in order to meet the educational objectives of the district. It is the obligation of the district to provide for a wide range of abilities and to respect the diversity of many differing points of view.

For the purpose of this policy and its attendant regulations, the terms Library and Instructional Materials may include, but not be limited to, books, textbooks, library books, movies, video tapes and discs, posters, art work, photographs, artifacts, specimens, original source materials, newspapers, magazines, computer programs, CD ROM and computer discs, data bases and any material available through computer network services.

Instructional materials are selected by the school district to implement, enrich, and support the educational program for the student. Materials must serve both the breadth of the curriculum and the needs and interests of individual students.

The choice of library and instructional materials for the Library/Media Center, computer work stations and classroom use will be made by professionally trained and qualified personnel who will be responsive to the suggestions of students, parents, concerned individuals or groups and other staff members. In making their choices, librarians and other professional personnel will recognize the need to balance their rights to exercise professional judgments with an awareness of their responsibilities to meet the educational goals and objectives of the school district. All selections of library and instructional materials will be consistent with the criteria and procedures of this policy.

Reputable, unbiased and professionally prepared selection aids such as, but not limited to, Book Links, Online book review sources including Library Periodicals, Motion Picture Academy of America rating system, School Library Journal, Vermont Department of Education's bibliographies and review sessions shall be consulted as guides for purchases, gifts and re-evaluation of library and all instructional materials. The main objective of our Library/Media Center is to provide the students and school community with a wide range of educational and recreational materials on all levels of difficulty with diversity of appeal, allowing for the presentation of many different points of view. The school district recognizes and accepts the Library Bill of Rights.

Criteria for Selection of Library & Instructional Materials

Staff members involved in selection of library and instructional materials will use the following criteria as a guide:

- A. Contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interests of the student
- B. Movies of G-rating will have favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel.
- C. BTMES will disallow the showing of commercially produced materials to audiences for whom the ratings themselves would disallow.
 1. "R" rated movies are for people who are 17 and over. This supports the committee's contention that there is really no place for an "R" rated movie in our school, therefore there will be no "R" rated movies shown.
 2. "PG-13" movies are not for children who are under 13 years of age.
 - a. An annual notice shall be sent home with students notifying parents of the possibility of these movies to be shown.
 3. When PG movies are intended to be shown it must first have administrative approval.
 4. Age and grade appropriate commercially produced educational movies may be shown to students.

- D. Reputation and significance of the author, producer, and/or publisher
- E. Validity, up-to-dateness, and appropriateness of material (no gratuitous nudity, violence or excessive vulgar language)
- F. High degree of potential user appeal
- G. Consistency with the general educational goals of the state and the goals, aims and objective of the school district
- H. High standards of quality, integrity, factual content and presentation
- I. Appropriateness for the subject area, age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, level of preparation and social development of students for whom the materials are selected
- J. Contribution the material makes to breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial issues and relevance to instructional program
- K. Currency, relevance, permanence and value of material
- L. Reflection of the interests and needs of the students, faculty and school community Literary and/or artistic value
- M. Presentation of information with the greatest degree of accuracy and clarity possible
- N. Fair and unbiased presentation of information
- O. Favorable reviews found in standard selection sources

Procedures for Citizen Review of Library & Instructional Materials/Complaints

The appropriate personnel responsible for the library/media, audio visual, computer and classroom instructional materials will maintain an accurate listing of all books and other primary instructional materials housed or used in their areas or classrooms to the extent reasonably possible. Such materials will be made available for inspection to any district resident or parent/guardian by appointment within seven days after receiving written request. People who wish to review library and instructional materials currently used by the school or being considered for use should direct their initial request in writing to the librarian or appropriate teacher. They may take one copy of library books and/or printed instructional materials from the school premises for not more than 48 hours. They may review all other instructional materials only on school premises.

Unless the complainant and school personnel agree, no duly selected material (as outlined in Policy IJK) whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the school except upon recommendation of the Review Panel and formal action of the School Board.

Dealing with complaints regarding instructional materials:

1. Any person who wishes to request reconsideration of the use of any instructional materials shall be encouraged to talk with the appropriate teacher, preferably in person. an individual parent/guardian has the right to request that his/her child not be required to use a specific instructional material, provided an explanatory written request to excuse the child is made to the teacher and a copy sent to the building principal. Alternative supplemental materials will be provided when circumstances warrant such action.
2. If there is need for further appeal, the complainant or staff member should present, to the principal, in writing, any objections for discussion. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the conference with the principal, he/she may request, in writing, a conference with the Superintendent. The complainant shall include in this request a brief explanation of the reason for the conference.
3. The Superintendent shall offer to meet with all parties involved in an attempt to mediate the issue.
4. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting with the Superintendent, the complainant may file a written complaint to the School Board through the Superintendent on the appropriate form. This form is available in the office of the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent shall then present all correspondence and pertinent materials to the School Board. The School Board will direct the Superintendent to convene a Review Panel which will follow procedures outlines in "administrative procedures for Library and Instructional Materials Selection, Public Concerns & Complaints." [IJK-P] Parent members of the Review Panel will be appointed by the School Board.

6. The findings and recommendation of the Review Panel shall be presented directly to the School Board by the chair person of the Review Panel.
7. The final decision regarding instructional materials that have been questioned will rest with the School Board after careful examination and discussion of the instructional materials with school officials, the complainant, or anyone else the School Board may wish to involve. A decision in such matters will be guided by state laws and regulations where applicable.
8. Responses by the teacher and/or administration to request reconsideration of instructional materials will be made in a timely fashion at each stage of the above process.

Initial Adoption: 11/7/83

Revised: 8/9/06

Legal References:

Title 16 V.S.A. §906 (23.1) (Course of Study)

Title 16 V.S.A. §563 (9.4) (Powers of School Boards)

Title 16 V.S.A. §3743 (129) (Textbooks, Appliances & Supplies)

Cross References:

IJK-P Procedures for Library and Instructional Materials