

LIBRARY RESOURCES: SELECTION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Selection of Resources

The principal in each building has the responsibility of coordinating and supervising the librarian in the selection and purchase of resources for the library. The selection process may involve the input of many people, including teachers, students, support staff, administrators, and community members, all of whom are encouraged to submit recommendations. The librarian will consult professionally recognized selection sources in order to evaluate resources and make final selection.

The following criteria are to be used in selection of library resources in our schools.

A. For Resources Presenting Information

Nonfiction resources play an important role in supporting the curriculum and providing an avenue for further exploration and research. Accuracy and appeal are vital aspects of these items.

1. Authoritativeness/reputation of author/publisher.
2. Timeliness/permanence/relevance to curriculum.
3. Accurate content.
4. Logical organization and presentation of information.
5. Readability and popular appeal.
6. Freedom from bias/presentation of various points of view.
7. Reflection of various physical and emotional development experiences.
8. Value commensurate with cost and/or need.
9. Appropriate format.
10. Appropriateness for the cognitive and emotional development of the children of a particular age.

11. Multi-cultural representativeness.

B. For Fictional Resources

Fiction has an important role as an educational medium. It supports the curriculum and encourages the reading interests of students. The treatment of historical, social, and personal issues in fiction can contribute to the understanding of human problems and relations.

1. Readability/effectiveness in sustaining reader's interest.
2. Plot believable within its own framework.
3. Convincing characterization.
4. Effective use of language.
5. Presentation of human emotions, values, and ideas.
6. Originality, literary merit, and aesthetic values.
7. Appropriateness for the cognitive and emotional development of the children of a particular age.
8. Multi-cultural representativeness.

C. Controversial Subject Areas

Resources on controversial issues should represent various points of view, and a sincere effort should be made to select equally representative resources. Resources on controversial topics may be included if they meet the above criteria, if they are relevant to the curriculum, and if they are consistent with the philosophy of the school system. The resources, including controversial language and/or illustrations, must be judged as a whole according to their intended purposes. However, in the final analysis, resources judged by a parent to be offensive may be made unavailable to his/her child but will remain in the school's collection.

**D. Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program:
An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS**

The school library plays a unique role in promoting, protecting, and educating about intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library, the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights apply equally to all libraries, including school libraries. Under these principles, all students have equitable access to library facilities, resources, and instructional programs.

School librarians assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School librarians work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Intellectual freedom is fostered by educating students in the use of critical thinking skills to empower them to pursue free inquiry responsibly and independently. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School librarians cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources that meet the needs as well as the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources that support the mission of the school district and are consistent with its philosophy, goals, and objectives. Resources in school library collections are an integral component of the curriculum and represent diverse points of view on both current and historical issues. These resources include materials that support the intellectual growth, personal development, individual interests, and recreational needs of students.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equitable access to resources and services, the school library provides resources that reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal

disapproval. School librarians resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access regardless of technology, formats or method of delivery.

Major barriers between students and resources include but are not limited: to imposing age, grade-level, or reading-level restrictions on the use of resources; limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information; charging fees for information in specific formats; requiring permission from parents or teachers; establishing restricted shelves or closed collections; and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

It is the responsibility of the governing board to adopt policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. It is the responsibility of school librarians to implement district policies and procedures in the school to ensure equitable access to resources and services for all students.

Adopted July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000; January 19, 2005; July 2, 2008; and July 1, 2014.

[ISBN 8389-7053-2]

Challenged Resources 6112B

The Board of Education recognizes the rights of individuals and groups within the community to challenge resources included in the library. In the interest of handling all complaints fairly and expeditiously, the following procedures will be used:

A. Informal Challenge

Most difficulties can and should be resolved informally at the building level by the librarian and the principal. The resources should be read/viewed/listened to by all parties. Every effort should be made to resolve the matter amicably and expediently. If an agreement cannot be made, the complainant will be offered a copy of Milford School District's Selection Policy #6112 A.

B. Formal Challenge

If all parties cannot reach agreement, the complainant should complete the "Request for Reconsideration Form" (see Appendix A) and submit it to the building principal within five school days. Access to challenged resources may be restricted during the reconsideration process.

Upon the receipt of the written complaint, the building principal shall inform the librarian, the superintendent, and appropriate members of the administrative staff. The librarian will be responsible for submitting the "Value of Challenged Library Resource Form" (Appendix B) to the principal within five school days.

C. Reconsideration Committee

Within five school days of receipt of the formal complaint, an ad hoc committee will be appointed and chaired by the principal to evaluate the resources. The committee will consist of:

1. two teachers from the building of the appropriate subject and/or grade level.
2. two non-complainant parent representatives.
3. one member of the community
4. if challenged at high school level, two members of student body
5. complainant(s) as non-voting member(s)
6. principal and certified librarian as non-voting members.

D. Reconsideration Process

1. Prior to the first committee meeting individual members shall :
 - a. Read/view/listen to the challenged resource in its entirety
 - b. Read reviews of the resource
 - c. Examine Selection Policy 6112A
2. The committee should meet within ten school days of its appointment to reconsider the resource. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program and intended audience for which it was selected (refer to Appendices A & B). Use discussion guide questions included in the "Committee Report Form..." (Appendix C).

E. Resolution

1. At the Reconsideration meeting, the committee members will be given the opportunity to share their views and discuss the information included on the reconsideration form. If a consensus is not reached at this meeting, the committee will be granted two additional school days to form a decision based on simple majority. This decision shall be one of the following:
 - *The resource is compatible with the philosophy and criteria of policy 6112A and should be retained.
 - *The resource is not compatible with the philosophy and criteria of policy 6112A and should be removed.
 - *The resource should be restricted as specified by the committee.
2. The principal shall complete the "Committee Report on the Reconsideration of Library Resources Form" (Appendix C) and forward the form to the superintendent and all committee members within five school days.
3. If any person is not satisfied with this decision, that person may appeal the decision to the superintendent within five school days. After reviewing the reconsideration documentation, the superintendent will render a decision within ten school days.
4. If an additional appeal is made to the school board, the written request must be received by the superintendent within five school days of his/her decision. The board will hold a conference within fifteen school days and render its final decision within ten school days after that. The board secretary will inform the

complainant of the board's decision in writing within the ten school days. The board's decision is final.

5. All documents used within the complaint procedure will be housed within the superintendent's office.
6. A resources which has undergone a challenge may not be rechallenged within three school years.

ADOPTED: 3/25/91

REVISED: 6/22/15