

## **Instruction**

### **Selection of Library Media Center Materials and Resources**

Library Media Center materials shall be selected relative to the needs, interests, and abilities of the students in the Amity Regional School District No. 5 (ARSD). The school library media specialists shall attempt to stimulate and guide reading and teach the effective use of the library.

To this end, the ARSD Board of Education (Board) affirms that it is the responsibility of its professional staff:

- To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and maturity levels of the students served;
- To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, societal standards, and reading skills;
- To provide materials on various sides of controversial topics so that young citizens may have an opportunity to make informed judgments in their daily lives;
- To provide materials representative of the diverse religious, ethnic, cultural, and social groups and individuals that contribute to our world community;
- To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials, based on their educational and/or socio-cultural value in order to assure a comprehensive collection for the school community.

The primary responsibility for the selection of library media center materials lies with library media specialists employed by the school system. Recommendation of resources may involve many people including but not limited to building principals, district administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of library media resources and making the recommendation for purchase rests with the professionally trained library media personnel.

The Board subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights (AASL). In evaluating a book or other instructional material, it shall be judged in its entirety and not on isolated pages or parts. Controversial topics shall not in themselves require automatic rejection of the material considered.

The Superintendent shall establish an administrative regulation setting forth the process for responding to complaints, if any, concerning school library media center materials.

In accordance with Section 10-221 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the final decision for controversial reading matter shall rest with the Board of Education. The Board may designate a committee of the board for the purpose of reviewing formal complaints. Such decision shall be made following careful examination and discussion of the book or reading material with school administration and any other parties the Board may wish to include. The Board of Education shall base its decision regarding the works in question on legitimate pedagogical interests.

(cf. 1312 - Public Complaints)

(cf. 3260 – Sale & Disposal of Books, Equipment & Supplies)

**Policy Adopted:** April 3, 2023

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5  
Woodbridge, Connecticut

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(cf. 4118.21 - Academic Freedom)  
(cf. 6144 – Controversial Issues)  
(c.f. 6163 – Instructional Resources for Students)  
(c.f. 9132.3 – Curriculum Committee)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

10-221(s) Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies, and procedures.

10-228 Free textbooks, supplies, materials and equipment.

10-240 Control of schools.

10-241 Powers of school districts.

Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81)

Office for Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association. (2016).  
*Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit for Public, School, & Academic Libraries.*

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### **Selection of Library Media Center Materials and Resources**

#### **I. Definitions**

**Library resources** will refer to any print, non-print, or digital material whose content is used for formal or informal teaching/learning purposes, or any such material provided by the libraries to be used by the school community in pursuit of personal growth and knowledge.

#### **II. Responsibility for Selection of Library Resources**

While selection of library resources arises from the recommendations and requests of many people (administrators, teachers, students, parents, community persons, resource personnel, etc.), the responsibility for selecting and acquiring library resources rests with the library media specialists.

#### **III. Criteria for Selection of Learning Resources**

- A. The following criteria will be used as they apply:
1. Library resources shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and district and the aims and objectives of individual schools and specific courses. Key to those goals is promoting reading as a leisure activity to build students' ability to interpret text at increasing levels of complexity, and to contribute to their intellectual development.
  2. Library resources shall be chosen to enrich and support the curriculum and to respond to the personal needs and interests of users.
  3. Library resources shall be judged on their qualities in terms of their:
    - a. artistic quality and/or literary style
    - b. authenticity
    - c. educational significance
    - d. factual content
    - e. physical format
    - f. presentation
    - g. readability
    - h. social relevance
    - i. appeal to user groups
    - j. technical quality
  4. Library resources shall include a range of formats and levels to appropriately address different subject areas, as well as students' range of ages and differences in emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development.
- B. The selection of learning resources on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

#### **IV. Procedures for Selection of Learning Resources**

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- A. In selecting library resources, school librarians will evaluate available resources to identify curricular and other student needs. Librarians may use a combination of personal recommendations, established collection practices in other libraries, and reputable, professionally-prepared aids to selection and other appropriate sources. Potential published sources include, but are not limited to the following:
1. Children's Catalog
  2. Middle and Junior High Core Collection
  3. Senior High Core Collection
  4. Nonbook Materials Core Collection
  5. AASA Science Books and Films Online
  6. Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
  7. Horn Book
  8. Kirkus Reviews
  9. Booklist
  10. Book Links
  11. Library Journal
  12. School Library Journal
  13. Other sources will be consulted as appropriate.
- B. Recommendations for purchase may come from administrators, teachers, students, district personnel, and community persons, as appropriate.
- C. Gift materials shall be judged by the criteria outlined and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria. Because of the work commitment involved in evaluating donations, any gifts of materials should first be approved by the school librarians. Donors should be advised that any materials accepted and not included in the library collection will be discarded.

### V. Removal of Materials from the Collection

Selection of library media center materials is an ongoing process that should include the removal and discarding of materials no longer appropriate to the library collection, and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value. Materials may be considered for removal or replacement if they:

- A. are in poor physical condition;
- B. are in formats that are considered obsolete;
- C. have not been circulated in recent history;
- D. are outdated in content, use, or accuracy;
  1. Copyright date should be considered; however, the decision to weed is not based solely on the copyright date of the material. Some older material may be considered of great historical value to the collection.
- E. are outdated and unattractive in format, design, graphics, and illustrations;

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- F. are biased or employ stereotypes, unless their purpose in the collection is to educate about such views in a social or historical context;
- G. duplicate information which is no longer in demand or which is available in other formats;
- H. are superseded by new or revised information;
- I. contain information which is inaccessible because they lack a table of contents, adequate indexing, and searching capabilities;
- J. were not selected in accordance with general selection criteria.

Despite the careful selection of library resources and the qualification of those involved in the selection process, objections to library resources may occur. Any resident, employee, or student of the school district may express an informal concern or formal request for reconsideration of a library resource.

## VI. Guiding Principles for Reconsideration

Library staff, school faculty, administrators, and School Library Materials Reconsideration Committee members complete their work using general agreed-upon principles:

- Libraries have diverse materials reflecting differing points of view, and a library's mission is to provide access to information to all users.
- All library users have a First Amendment right to read, view, and listen to library resources.
- The *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read Statement* of the American Library Association can be used as guiding documents.
- Any person has the right to express concerns about library resources and expect to have the objection taken seriously.
- When library resources are reconsidered, the principles of the freedom to read, listen, and view are defended rather than specific materials.
- A questioned item will be considered in its entirety, not judged solely on portions taken out of context.
- Parents and guardians have the right to determine the appropriateness of library resources for their own children and to guide the reading, viewing, and listening of those children. However, parents and guardians should afford the same right to other families; at no point in time will the wishes of one child's parents to restrict the reading or viewing of a particular item for their child(ren) infringe on other parents' rights to permit their child(ren) to read or view the same material.
- Parents or guardians may direct their children not to view or read particular library materials.
- Questioned items will remain in circulation during the reconsideration process.

## VII. Informal Complaints

Persons with a complaint about library print or digital resources should state their concerns to the school library media specialist. The library media specialist will listen attentively to the concerns and attempt to resolve the issue informally. As part of the discussion, the library media specialist

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will explain the library's selection policy, selection criteria, importance of a diverse collection with resources from many points of view, and the selection process. As they deem necessary, the library media specialist will also direct the complainant to materials which may include the library's mission statement, request for reconsideration of instructional resources form, and the *Library Bill of Rights*.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, the library media specialist will explain the formal reconsideration process and direct the complainant to the school district's library selection policy with reconsideration procedures and a request for reconsideration of library resources form. If there is concern about multiple items, a separate form must be completed for each item. No library resources should be removed or restricted from use as a result of the informal complaint.

If the completed and signed formal request for reconsideration form has not been received by administration within ten business days, the matter shall be considered closed.

### VIII. Formal Reconsideration

The following procedures should be followed if, after discussing the questioned resource, no resolution is made.

- A. The complainant should ask to speak to the building principal, if they have not done so already.
- B. If the complainant is dissatisfied with earlier informal discussions, the building principal will provide the reconsideration form.
- C. The complainant is required to complete and submit the reconsideration form to the building principal within ten business days.
- D. If a completed reconsideration form is not submitted within ten business days, the matter is considered closed.
- E. Upon receipt of the form, the building principal shall form an ad hoc Reconsideration Committee consisting of the following individuals and provide all members with a copy of the completed reconsideration form:
  1. Assistant Superintendent
    - a. The Assistant Superintendent shall serve as the committee chair and serve as the spokesperson for the committee at all meetings and before the Board of Education when decisions are made.
  2. Building principal
  3. Library media specialist
  4. Teacher representative from appropriate content area of resource being challenged.
- F. The work in question will remain on library shelves and in circulation until a formal decision is made.
- G. The library media specialist(s) in the building where the complaint originated will secure copies of the material in question for the committee to review.

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- H. The library media specialist(s) in the building where the complaint originated will provide the Reconsideration Committee with the Library Bill of Rights as well as necessary informational handouts pertaining to intellectual freedom.
- I. The Reconsideration Committee chair shall schedule a formal reconsideration meeting. All committee members shall fully review the resources and any other relevant materials prior to the meeting and shall be allotted sufficient time to do so.
- J. The Reconsideration Committee shall follow the procedures listed below:
  - 1. A member of the committee shall keep minutes, which should be filed with the chair, during each meeting.
  - 2. At the initial meeting, the committee will review the reconsideration committee guidelines and procedures.
  - 3. The library media specialist from the building where the complaint originated shall review their professionally prepared materials (reviews, list of awards, etc.) and offer an opportunity for committee members to ask questions.
  - 4. The committee reserves the right to use outside expertise, if necessary, to help in its decision-making process.
  - 5. During the initial or subsequent meetings, the committee will make its decision determined by the simple majority to retain or remove the resource.
  - 6. The chair shall present the committee's written decision (including a minority report, if needed) to the complainant and the superintendent of schools within five business days after the decision is made.
- K. The procedures to appeal to the Reconsideration Committee decision will be as follows:
  - 1. An appeal of the decision must be made in writing to the Board of Education within 10 business days of the Reconsideration Committee chair's formal delivery of the decision to the complainant and the superintendent of schools.
  - 2. A meeting will be scheduled no later than 20 days after receipt of the appeal. The Board of Education may use a committee to hear the appeal.
  - 3. At the appeal meeting, the Reconsideration Committee chair will present the committee's decision to the Board.
  - 4. At the appeal meeting, the complainant or designee will present the petitioner's position.
  - 5. The Board will review all information and will issue a written response. This response is final.
  - 6. The written response will remain on file with the Assistant Superintendent. The material would no longer be eligible for reconsideration. Individuals requesting reconsideration of resources that have already been reviewed will be provided a copy of the Board's written response.

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**Request for Reconsideration and Removal of Library Resources Form**

Amity Regional School District No. 5 has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to a Reconsideration Committee and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources.

Submission of this completed form initiates those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to the building principal.

**Section I:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent (check one):

\_\_\_ Myself (as parent/guardian)

\_\_\_ Myself (as private citizen)

\_\_\_ An organization

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section II:**

Title of Resource: \_\_\_\_\_

Resource Medium:

_____ Book	_____ Film/Video	_____ Magazine	_____ Database
_____ Audio Recording	_____ Digital Resource	_____ Textbook	_____ App



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_____ Newspaper	_____ Game	_____ Streaming Media	_____ Other
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Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

Is the resource part of the school curriculum? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Unsure

**Section III:**

1. What brought this resource to your attention?

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3a. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the entire resource? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

3b. If not, what sections did you review?

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4. What concerns you about the resource?

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5. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

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6. Is there any additional information you wish to share with the committee?

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Name

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Signature

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Date