



Rockford Area Schools SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES AND LIBRARY/MEDIA MATERIALS

Rockford Area Schools support the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States as expressed in official statements of professional education associations.

For purposes of this policy, the term "resources" will refer to any person/s or any material/s used for teaching/learning purposes. Resources include, but are not limited to, textbooks, school library books, supplementary reading and informational materials, charts, community resource people, agencies and organizations, kits, maps, models, videos, periodicals, pictures, realia, sound recordings, video recordings, computer software, electronic databases, plays, concerts, athletic events, and written and performed music.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Responsibility for Selection of Instructional Resources

The School Board delegates to the District's administrators, school principals, and professional staff the responsibility to act on its behalf in the selection and purchase of instructional resources.

Criteria for Selection of Instructional Resources

1. Resources will support and be consistent with the general educational goals of Rockford Area Schools and the goals, objectives, and academic standards of individual schools and specific courses.
2. Resources will be chosen to support and enrich individual school curriculum and to meet the personal needs of students.
3. Resources will be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of students for whom the materials are selected.
4. Resources will provide a background of information that will motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
5. Resources will be selected in compliance with District Policy 606: [Rockford Area School District #883 -- Policy 606](#)
6. Resources will provide information on multiple sides of issues so that users may develop the practice of critical analysis.
7. Resources will be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses and will be judged as a whole.

Procedure for Selection of Instructional Resources

1. In selecting resources, professional personnel will evaluate the available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids for selection, the recommendations of professional associations, and other appropriate resources
[Criteria Framework for the Vetting of Instructional Materials](#)
2. Administrators, teachers, media specialists, other School District personnel, students, parents, and other community persons may make recommendations for purchase.
3. Gift resources will be judged by the criteria outlined above and will be accepted or rejected based on those criteria.
4. Selection is an ongoing process that includes the removal of resources no longer appropriate and the replacement of resources that have been lost or damaged.

LIBRARY/MEDIA MATERIALS

Responsibility for Selection of Library/Media Materials

The School Board delegates to the District's administrators, school principals, and professional staff the responsibility to act on its behalf in the selection and purchase of library/media materials. The responsibility for the selection of library, media center, and/or media area materials is delegated to the building library/media/instructional technology specialists and aides under the direction of building and district administration. Additionally, district-purchased classroom library materials are selected by the classroom teachers in partnership with the building library/media/instructional technology specialists and aides under the direction of building and district administration. Teachers, instructional and curriculum facilitators, principals, and students are called upon for their ideas regarding specific materials needed in a field of specialization.

Criteria for Selection of Library/Media Materials

Needs of the individual school based on knowledge of the curriculum and the existing collections are given first consideration. Resources will be selected in compliance with District Policy 606.

Materials for purchase are considered on the basis of:

1. appropriateness of content for student age group
2. usefulness of content
3. absence of cultural, racial, or sexual bias
4. quality, accuracy, objectivity, and currency of information
5. organization and presentation of content
6. degree of readability and/or comprehensibility
7. degree of potential user appeal
8. artistic quality and/or literary style

9. quality of format
10. values commensurate with cost and/or needs
11. individuality of item regardless of series

All materials, when considered as a whole, should:

1. implement, enrich, and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual student needs, varied interests, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and maturity levels.
2. reflect the ideas and beliefs of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contribution to the American and world heritage and culture, thereby enabling students to develop an intellectual integrity in forming judgments.
3. be that which encourages growth and knowledge, and that which develops literacy, cultural and aesthetic appreciation and ethical standards.
4. present all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times.
5. be reflective of students' demographics; allowing students to see themselves in the author, character, and/or story.
6. enhance students' motivation to read.

Procedures for Selection of Library/Media Materials

In selecting media materials for purchase, the library/media/instructional technology specialist and/or aide will evaluate the existing collection and consult reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and specialists from all applicable departments and/or all grade levels. Classroom teachers should generate a list of desired media materials and collaborate with their building's library/media/instructional technology specialist and/or aide to pursue purchase. Additional considerations to be made by the library/media/instructional technology specialist and/or aide include:

- purchasing, as needed, multiple copies of outstanding and high-demand materials.
- carefully examining sets of media materials before purchasing.

Review Sources

School staff will utilize contracted partners in educational technology, services and print/digital content to review recommended materials for purchase.

Donations

Materials donated to the library/media center/media areas should be selected or rejected based upon the selection criteria defined in this policy

STUDYING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

A controversial issue involves a problem about which different individuals and groups urge conflicting courses of action. It is an issue for which society has not found a commonly accepted solution, and it is of sufficient significance that each proposed way of dealing with it is objectionable to some sector of the citizenry and arouses protest. The protest may result from a feeling that a cherished belief, an economic interest, or a basic principle is threatened.

Rockford Area Schools have a responsibility to include, in various curriculum areas and at all appropriate grade levels, content dealing with critical issues some of which may be viewed as controversial.. Development of rational thinking and preparation for citizenship are the primary reasons for including the study of controversial issues in the curriculum.

Rockford Area Schools, as an educational institution, and the individual classroom teacher have a responsibility to:

1. Provide the student an opportunity to study controversial issues which have political, economic, or social significance about which they will begin to have an opinion.
2. Provide the student competent instruction, balancing the various and/or conflicting points of view in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice. Through the consideration of controversial issues, teachers will guide students in developing and using inquiry and critical thinking skills such as questioning, gathering and analyzing data, testing the validity of information and arguments, drawing and supporting their own conclusions, and using the language of the academic disciplines to engage in civil discourse on the issues.
3. Provide the student the right to form, identify and express his/her own opinions on controversial issues in an atmosphere of safety, intellectual curiosity, and respect for diversity of opinions, beliefs, and personal backgrounds.
4. Refrain from imposing one's personal beliefs, opinions, or biases.

Guidelines For Selection Of Controversial Issues To Be Studied In The Classroom

1. The issue should contribute toward helping students develop techniques for examining other controversial issues.
2. The issue should be suitable for students of the maturity and background represented in the class.
3. The issue should be directly related to course content, academic standards and support the achievement of course objectives.

Student/Family Options Related to Curricular Selections

All Rockford Area Schools curricular selections follow a rigorous vetting and review process to provide adolescent readers with content and themes that are both age and developmentally appropriate. As is the case in society, family values can and do differ with respect to their definition of appropriateness. Please note that families are the ultimate decision-makers and if an alternative (see Alternative Instruction below) piece of literature or content is desired as a replacement, families can request this from the building principal. For details regarding the literature selections for specific classes, please feel free to contact your child's teacher, or principal.

OBJECTIONS TO RESOURCES: RE-EVALUATION AND RESPONSE

Objections to resources may be made despite the care and procedure followed in their selection. "Objection" is defined as a verbal or written statement requesting that a resource be excluded, included, or restricted.

Objections to resources should be submitted and responded to in accordance with provisions of this regulation under Objections to Instructional Resources; Procedures for Reevaluating and Responding.

Alternative Instruction

Under the Planning, Evaluating, Reporting (PER) law, a parent, guardian, or adult student (18 years or older) may review the content of instructional materials. If the materials are found to be objectionable, school personnel will make reasonable arrangements for alternative instruction. Such instruction may be provided by the parent, guardian, or adult student at his or her own cost if the alternative instruction offered by the School District does not meet the objector's concerns. No penalties will be imposed by the School District for arranging alternative instruction.

School personnel may evaluate and assess the quality of the student's work. However, if the alternative instruction is to be used for credit(s) toward graduation or as an integral part of instruction toward educational progress, Evaluation and Assessment are required. The method of evaluating and assessing the quality of the student's work will be mutually agreed upon at the time alternative instruction is being discussed with appropriate school personnel by the parent, guardian, or adult student.

OBJECTIONS TO INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES: PROCEDURES FOR RE-EVALUATING AND RESPONDING

These regulations provide a system for receiving, considering, and acting upon complaints regarding instructional resources used in Rockford Area Schools.

I. Procedures to Follow When an Objection Occurs

- A. Those submitting an objection (must be a district parent/guardian and/or district resident) and must first be directed to the building principal or the designee.
- B. The principal and/or other appropriate staff will explain to the objector the school's selection procedure, selection rationale, selection criteria, and the qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.
- C. If, after Procedure B is followed, the objector wishes the district to reevaluate the selection of a resource, the [Request for the Reevaluation of an Instructional Resource](#) will be explained and the objector invited to complete it in its entirety and return it to the building principal. If the objector fails to return the form, the objection will be regarded as waived or withdrawn.
- D. The objector will complete one *Request for Reevaluation of a Resource* form for each resource to which he/she objects.
- E. Upon the receipt of a completed and signed *Request for Reevaluation of a Resource* form, the building principal will promptly inform the Superintendent, Director of Teaching & Learning, and the classroom teacher.
- F. Within seven regular school days, a Committee for Reevaluation of a Resource will be formed.
- G. The Committee for Reevaluation of Resources (see Section II, below) will:
 - 1. Be notified of the objection.
 - 2. Read, view, or listen to the questioned resource.
 - 3. Meet to consider the questioned resource and make a decision.
 - 4. Follow all procedures outlined in Section II, below.
- H. Use of the questioned resource will not be restricted during the reevaluation process.

II. Committee for Reevaluation

- A. A committee will be convened if an objection is raised. The committee will be composed of:
 - 1. The Director of Teaching & Learning and/or Superintendent.
 - 2. One building principal not from the school site where the objection has been raised.
 - 3. One teacher selected by Education Minnesota Rockford (EMR), who teaches at the level (secondary or elementary) where the objection was raised.
 - 4. One member of the District Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Advisory Committee.
 - 5. Two teachers from the site where the objection was raised, selected by the Building Leadership Team.
 - 6. One to two Rockford Area Schools parents selected by district administration.

7. Upon meeting, the committee members will select a recording secretary.

B. The District-level committee representative will:

1. Notify committee members of the objection and set a meeting date.
2. Distribute a copy of the completed *Request for Reevaluation of a Resource* form to each committee member.
3. Distribute the appropriate *Checklist for the Reevaluation Committee* to each committee member.
4. Obtain and arrange for reading/viewing/listening to the questioned resource by the committee.
5. Obtain critical reviews, if available, of the questioned resource and send them to each committee member prior to the reevaluation committee meeting.
6. Within 15 regular school days of receiving the objection, hold a reevaluation committee meeting to discuss the questioned resource and determine if a course of action is necessary. If more time is necessary, the committee members and person(s) submitting the objection will be notified.

C. The Committee for Reevaluation of a Resource will:

1. Examine the questioned resource in its entirety, using either checklist I or checklist II.
2. Determine professional acceptance of the resource by reading critical reviews.
3. Evaluate the resource as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
4. Discuss the resource in the context of the educational program.
5. Prepare a written report using the *Report of the Reevaluation Committee* form.

D. The recording secretary will:

1. Record attendance.
2. Take notes and complete the *Report of the Reevaluation Committee* form.
3. Obtain signatures from committee members on the Report of the Reevaluation Committee form.
4. Be responsible for filing all required reports within three regular school days following the decision.
5. Send copies of the completed Report of the Reevaluation Committee form to the objector, the building principal, and the Superintendent.

III. Resolution

- A. The written report will be provided to the Objector, Superintendent, Director of Teaching & Learning, and the building Principal. This will be the official record of the case.
- B. The decision will be binding for the individual school.
- C. The committee's decision may be appealed to the School Board.

Checklist I: Checklist for Reevaluation Committee: Imaginative Works

Title:

Author/Producer:

A. Purpose

1. What is the purpose, theme, or message of this resource?
2. Who is the intended user?
3. How well is this purpose accomplished?
4. How well does this resource contribute to a more compassionate understanding of human beings?
5. Is it well written/produced?
6. How well does the resource contribute to the history of literature or ideas?

B. Format/structure

What is the contribution of each of these elements to the resource?:

1. Plot
2. Setting
3. Character development
4. Illustration/visuals
5. Authenticity and/or accuracy

C. Is the material age appropriate in the following categories:

1. Gender/disability sensitive
2. Use of language
3. Prejudice (i.e., racial, religious, sexual, disabled)
4. Violence/cruelty/brutality
5. Advocacy of ideas

D. Reviews (Two if available)

1. Source:

Is review favorable or unfavorable? _____

Substance/Summary of review:

Is this review source reputable? Yes _____ No _____

2. Source:

Is review favorable or unfavorable? _____

Substance/Summary of review:

Is this review source reputable? Yes _____ No _____

E. Additional comments (use back of page if necessary)

Checklist II: Checklist for Reevaluation Committee: Nonfiction

Author:

Title:

A. Purpose

1. What is the overall purpose of the resource?
2. Is the purpose accomplished? _____Yes_____ No
3. Who is the intended user?

B. Authenticity

1. Is the author competent and qualified in the field? _____Yes_____ No
2. What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field?
3. Is the resource up-to-date?_____Yes_____ No
4. Are information sources well documented?_____Yes_____ No
5. Are translations and retellings faithful to the original? _____Yes_____ No

C. Appropriateness

1. Does the resource promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum?
_____Yes_____ No
2. Is it appropriate to the level of instruction intended?
_____Yes_____ No
3. Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age level?
_____Yes_____ No

D. Content

1. Is the content of this resource well presented by providing adequate scope, depth, and continuity?
_____Yes_____ No
2. Does this resource present information not otherwise available?
_____Yes_____ No
3. Does this resource give a new dimension or direction to its subject?
_____Yes_____ No

E. Reviews

1. Source of review:

Favorable reviewed _____ Unfavorable reviewed _____

2. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids?

_____ Yes _____ No If the answer is yes, please list the titles of selection aids.

Additional Comments:

Evaluation of Instructional Programs

Rockford Area Schools is committed to the continuous evaluation of our instructional programs as a means to improve the educational offerings for the students we serve. Statutorily, the Rockford Area Schools Board of Education is charged with the responsibility of evaluating the educational programs offered in the school district. Based on the annual evaluation, the School Board works with the Superintendent to provide direction in setting goals and procedures for program evaluation.

The evaluation of instructional programs will be used to improve decision-making as to the retention, modification, or elimination of District instructional programs. District, site-based teams, and the District Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Advisory Committee will be involved with the evaluation process.

The individuals charged with the guidance and of the evaluation of instructional programs in Rockford Area Schools are the Superintendent and Director of Teaching & Learning.

Definitions:

“Instruction” means methods of providing learning experiences that enable a student to meet state and district academic standards and graduation requirements including applied and experiential learning.

“Curriculum” means district or school adopted programs and written plans for providing students with learning experiences that lead to expected knowledge and skills and college and career readiness.

“World’s Best Workforce” means striving to meet school readiness goals; have all third-grade students achieve grade-level literacy; close the academic achievement gap among all racial and ethnic groups of students and between students living in poverty and students not living in poverty; have all students attain career and college readiness before graduating from high school, and have all students graduate from high school.

“Experiential Learning” means learning for students that includes career exploration through a specific class or course or through work-based experiences such as job shadowing, mentoring, entrepreneurship, service learning, volunteering, internships, other cooperative work experience, youth apprenticeship, or employment.

Performance Measures:

Required by statute, performance measures must include the following:

- A. The size of the achievement gap as measured by rigorous courses taken and enrichment experiences by student groups.
- B. Student performance on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments.
- C. High school graduation rates.
- D. Career and College Readiness.

Rockford Area Schools Instructional Materials

Curriculum Review Process - Under the guidance of the building principal, staff will engage in a curriculum review process to assess relevance and alignment of the curriculum and the effectiveness of implementation.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS

Each school site will implement a programmatic plan which organizes staff, students, instructional time, and resources into a flexible model to enhance the learning potential and outcomes of each individual student. The instructional models, which vary by site according to the needs of students, will assure that services to all students will be:

Standards-based in which all students are challenged and supported in meeting or exceeding high expectations through an instructional program that is referenced to state and national standards and aligned assessments.

Student-based in which an individualized plan is designed to address individual student needs as indicated by a systematic system of assessment and instruction.

A personalized educational program will be implemented to provide appropriate and challenging educational experiences for all students. The use of assessments and student progress data will allow the staff to respond appropriately to the learning needs of individuals. Documentation of programming will be provided for each student. This information will be accessible to families throughout the student's career in the School District.

Academic Intervention

The instructional model at each school is designed to provide the most appropriate instruction when students need intensified support in order to meet academic standards. The District defines intervention as standards-based supplementary instruction provided specifically when students need additional and/or different learning experiences to make significant academic growth. Instructional intervention can range from comprehensive programs to more narrowly focused, discrete classroom strategies.

- Intervention programs and strategies are designed to provide students who require additional and different instruction the support to increase their progress in order to be successful meeting grade-level expectations and to be ready for the next level of instruction.
- Intervention programs and strategies are provided according to individual student goals and plans, developed through communication with staff, parents, and student(s).
- Multiple measures of student progress are used in making decisions about providing intervention programs and strategies.

Academic Acceleration and Enrichment - Advanced Differentiation

The District defines acceleration as instruction and learning experiences with academic standards at a level beyond the student's assigned grade level.

- Acceleration is designed to provide students who demonstrate extraordinarily high levels of skill and understanding in an academic area the opportunity to move ahead to a level at which they will be challenged and engaged in learning.
- Acceleration in core area courses is provided according to a long-range plan developed through communication among school staff, parents, and student(s).
- Multiple measures of student progress are used in making decisions regarding acceleration or placing students in especially rigorous courses.

Advanced Differentiation learning experiences provide students working at, below, or above their assigned grade level with additional challenges and with opportunities to engage with greater depth in topics of special interest. Enrichment opportunities are provided at all levels of the program.

CREDIT FOR LEARNING

Credit for Learning

The District will recognize student achievement which occurs in other schools, in alternative learning sites, in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options and other advanced enrichment programs, and in out-of-school experiences such as community organizations, work-based learning, and other educational activities and opportunities.

For Transfer: When a student transfers into the District from another Minnesota public school district, any standards completed in the sending district, along with scores recorded by the sending district, shall be recorded as completed with a notation indicating from the district the record is transferred.

For Equalizing: When a student transfers into the District with a transcript from a school other than a Minnesota public school district, the following shall be the policy and procedure for recognizing such previous achievement:

1. When the student has received credit for a course that fulfills or approximates the provisions of a full standard, the standards completed shall be treated as if they had been accomplished in a Minnesota public school;
2. Effort shall be made to ascertain the content of courses, programs, and learning previously achieved to credit the student as fully as possible for previous learning. This may include asking the student or the sending school to verify the content of completed courses and programs when such is not clear from the transcript.

For Credit by Assessment: When a student requests recognition of work completed but for which no academic transcript exists, the student shall make an application to the principal. Not more than sixty days after the application is filed, the principal shall inform the student and the student's parents what evidence must be presented to certify the completion of the standard. Evidence of completion might include letters of support and explanation from individuals or organizations who have actually witnessed the student's demonstration of the standard, oral or written tests, interviews, actual performances or demonstrations assessed by district staff or others knowledgeable in the specifications of the standard, and/or other evidence as appropriate for the individual situation. Upon successful submission of the required evidence, the standard shall be noted on the transcript, with a score if appropriate, and a notation of where and when the standard was completed and verified.

Credit for Learning Projects and Activities

To allow students to receive credit for independent projects conducted under the supervision of non- District instructors or experts, the following process will be followed:

The student will complete a [Rockford Area Schools Credit for Learning](#) application in which the proposed project or activity is described, the content expert is identified, and the alignment with academic standards is demonstrated. The application will be accessible to students in the High School Counseling Office, and school counselors will advise students and parents regarding how the credit for learning option fits within the student's 4-year course-taking plan.

1. The Credit for Learning application is a proposal to complete an independent, standards-based learning experience outside of school to earn high school credit. Completion of the Credit for Learning application must be made by August 15, January 15, or May 15 for pre-approval. Alternate application dates may be applied by the principal. The proposal is to be submitted to the student's school counselor who will assure that the proposal is complete and signed by parents and principal before forwarding it to the District Learning Services Department for review.
2. Credit for Learning proposals will be reviewed by the Director of Teaching & Learning for the purpose of establishing the timelines and criteria needed to fulfill the requirements for credit.
3. The Learning Services Department will communicate with the student and the school counselor about whether the proposal has been accepted. If the application has not been accepted by the District, specific information will be provided about revisions to assist students in improving the proposal. The student who submitted an application for Credit for Learning will be notified of acceptance or rejection of their proposal within 30 days of

applying.

4. After completing projects students will submit evidence of learning as specified in the project proposal to the District Learning Services Department.
5. The student and school counselor will be notified regarding whether or not the completed work will fulfill the requirements for credit.
6. The school counselor will follow up to assure that credit for successful projects is entered as a Pass (P) into the official transcript.

TIME FOR COMPLETION OF COURSEWORK

If students can demonstrate extenuating circumstances, such as an illness/injury, family crisis, etc., they may be granted two weeks from the last day of a semester course or last day of a year-long course to turn in overdue homework or take quizzes in order to adjust a grade in that course. Requests for additional time will be made in writing to the building principal who will, in consultation with the teacher, and appropriate counselor, make a determination if extenuating circumstances exist.

SHARED TIME STUDENT

Definition: **Shared Time Student** - A student who is enrolled part-time in a public school and the rest of the time in a nonpublic school or a home school.

Rockford Area Schools will provide educational and co-curricular opportunities for shared time students according to the following guidelines:

1. Shared time students must enroll in District 883 classes that generate state per pupil aid (Under current law only academic and special education instruction are eligible for some portion of state per pupil aid.)
2. Resident shared time students may attend facilities in their attendance area. Non-resident shared time students may attend designated facilities. Course selection by shared time students may be limited based on the Compulsory Education Statute, Minnesota Statutes Annotated 120A.22 (subd. 9).
3. If home school shared time students participate in co-curricular activities which are under the control of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL), the home school must meet MSHSL rules.
4. Students wishing to enroll on a shared-time basis must make application to the District #883 Student Information & Reporting Department, 6051 Ash Street Rockford, MN, by August 15 for enrollment beginning the next school year.
5. Rockford Area Schools does not provide diplomas to graduating seniors who are homeschooled. These diplomas are to be issued by the home school. The District may issue diplomas to students who have earned full time credits through PSEO during their senior year, or a combination of PSEO credits and credits earned through attending classes at their assigned public high school for the final semester in their senior year.
6. Students are allowed to take a maximum of three classes. The purpose of home school is to provide families the opportunity to educate their own children. Attendance in public schools over 50% of the time is not in keeping with the intent of homeschooling.
7. Shared Time students may be allowed to participate in any classroom activities that are a part of the course of study they are enrolled in at the public school. They are not allowed to participate in classroom activities that are not a part of that specific course of study.

Ref.:

Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program (American Association of School Librarians)
Censorship Statement (International Reading Association) Freedom to Read Statement (American Association of Publishers)
Freedom to Teach, to Learn, and to Express Ideas in the Public Schools (Minnesota State Board of Education)
Library Bill of Rights (American Library Association)
Statement on Intellectual Freedom (Association for Educational Communications and Technology)
Student's Right to Read (National Council of Teachers of English) December 2013