



Selection and Reconsideration of Media Center Materials

Forward

A Materials Selection and Freedom-to-Read Committee prepared the original draft of these policies and procedures, which the FWCS Board of School Trustees approved in 1970. FWCS media personnel reviewed and revised these in 1997, 2007, 2013, and 2023.

Media Center Mission

The media centers of Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) are welcoming and inclusive spaces where students are empowered to be lifelong critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information and technology.

Support for Intellectual Freedom

The media centers of FWCS believe every student deserves the right to read, seek information and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution. The media centers of this school district are guided by the intellectual freedom principles presented in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, its interpretive statements including, "Access to Resources and Services in the School Library" and the Freedom to Read Statement.

Objectives

To meet the diverse needs of our community, FWCS media center personnel seek to:

- Provide faculty and students with materials that enrich and support the curriculum and reflect the cultural and diverse needs of FWCS students including age, race, gender, ethnicity, orientation, socio-economic status, and religious affiliation (FWCS Shared Humanity Statement, 2023).
- Include educational materials with various levels of difficulty that support all curricular areas and allow for the presentation of different points of view.
- Select materials that present various sides of controversial issues, giving students an opportunity to develop analytical skills, recognize bias and prejudices, resulting in informed decisions.
- Provide materials that present all points of view concerning current international, national, and local problems and issues; and
- Select materials in all formats, including up-to-date, high quality, varied literature to develop and strengthen a love of reading.

Procedure for the Selection of Media Center Materials

1. Media personnel may select materials recommended by:
 - A. critical reviews published in educational, literary, and/or professional journals.
 - B. lists prepared by teachers, media personnel, and other professional groups.
 - C. teachers, administrators, and/or media personnel after personal examination.
2. All materials must meet copyright standards, adhering to both federal and local guidelines.
3. Media personnel shall consider the professional reputation of a publisher, distributor, or producer.
4. Materials are selected on the basis of assessed curricular needs the interest of students.
5. Materials should relate to the maturity level, experience, and the understanding of the users for whom the materials are recommended.
6. Materials should provide a global perspective and promote diversity as a positive attribute of our society. It is important to include materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures.
7. Materials should reflect the basic humanity of all people and be free of stereotypes, caricatures, distorted dialect, sexual bias, and other offensive characteristics. Materials concerning religious, social, and political content should inform rather than indoctrinate. Inclusion of profanity or sexuality should not automatically rule out books or other materials.
8. Students have the right to information on both sides of a controversial issue. By having access to a variety of resources, students will have the knowledge base to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The media center provides free and equitable access to all information.
9. The sentence structure, vocabulary, form, and style of expression of materials should be suitable for the users for whom the materials are intended.
10. The content of materials should stimulate thinking and inquiry rather than mere memorization of facts.
11. Factual materials should be authentic, up-to-date, and accurate.
12. Illustration (including photographs, drawings, prints, maps, charts, diagrams, models, realia, etc.) should make a significant contribution to the item.
 - A. Illustrations should be appropriately chosen for the concept being interpreted and should relate to the maturity level of the user.
 - B. Illustrations should show recognition of the equal worth of people and should reflect the principals of nondiscrimination as stated in FWCS Board policy.
13. Gift items may be accepted by a media center if approved by the school personnel whose responsibility it is to select media center materials. These items should be judged by the same selection criteria outlined for the acquisition of new media center materials.
14. Selection criteria will be used in considering digital subscriptions (e.g., research databases) and print subscriptions (e.g., magazines), but each individual article, photograph, etc. in a subscription cannot be evaluated separately.
15. The procedure to withdraw and discard materials from a media center collection is as important as the initial selection of materials. Weeding items that are outdated, in poor physical condition, or are of questionable literary, artistic, political, or scientific quality should be done on a continual basis.

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Media Selection Guides Used by FWCS for Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, and Other Publications

ONLINE SOURCE REVIEW SITES

BOOKLIST. Reliable reviewing devoted to careful appraisal of books, government publications, and nonprint materials. ALA

CHILDREN'S CATALOG. A classified annotated guide to over 6,000 books for grades K-9. H.W. Wilson. Updated yearly.

COMMON SENSE MEDIA. Provides age-based ratings and reviews of books, movies, TV shows, podcasts to assist families in making informed choices on appropriate media for children.

FOLLETT TITLEWAVE. Provides full professional reviews from respected review sites such as Booklist, Kirkus Reviews, Publishers Weekly and School Library Journal.

HORN BOOK GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT BOOKS. Provides critical annotations on all hardcover children's and young adult books in the U.S. from the previous six-month period. Horn Book, Inc.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY CATALOG. Provides classified annotations of over 3,000 books for middle school grades. H.W. Wilson.

LIBRARY JOURNAL. Professional reviews of approximately 6,000 titles in a wide range of disciplines.

SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL. Reliable reviewing devoted to careful appraisal of books and nonprint materials.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY CATALOG. Catalog of over 5,000 books and pamphlets with many analytical entries selected for use in tenth through twelfth grades. H.W. Wilson.

Procedure for Reconsideration of a Media Center Material

When a parent or guardian of an FWCS student or any community member who lives within the boundaries of FWCS (hereinafter complainant) requests the reconsideration of a material in an FWCS school's media center, the school shall adhere to the following procedure. FWCS will not entertain requests to remove materials from media centers made by other individuals under this Procedure.

No parent or group of parents has the right to determine the reading matter for students other than their own children. The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent to request that his or her child not have to read given instructional materials, provided a written request is made to the appropriate building principal. Books and other reading material of sound factual authority will not be prescribed or removed from media center shelves because of partisan doctrinal approval or disapproval.

1. Complainants may share their concerns with a secondary school's media specialist or the Media Services Coordinator at the elementary level. Staff will listen to the concerns and attempt to resolve concerns informally.
2. If staff cannot resolve the issue informally, parents or guardians may further discuss the matter with their student's school's principal or designee. The principal or designee of the school where a complainant's student would attend based on complainant's address will hear the complaints of community members who are not the parent or guardian of a current FWCS student. If requested, the school principal or designee shall meet with the complainant within three school days.
3. If complainants remain dissatisfied with the response of the principal or designee, they may complete the "Request for Reconsideration of Material Form" available on the FWCS public website.

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4. The Media Services Coordinator will receive the Form. If the request alleges that the material contains obscenity or material harmful to minors as defined by Indiana law, the Coordinator will notify the Clerk of the Board. The Clerk will add the request to the agenda for the next public meeting of the Board. The Board will review the request, not the material itself, at the next public meeting.
5. The Media Services Coordinator will convene a reconsideration committee.
 - A. Elementary. The committee shall include the Media Services Coordinator, a classroom teacher, and a parent.
 - B. Secondary. The committee shall include the School Media Specialist, a classroom teacher, and a parent.
6. The Media Services Coordinator will secure copies of the material for the reconsideration committee to review, in addition to professional review sources for the challenged material. All committee members will fully review the resource (read, view or listen to the entire material) before meeting. The Coordinator will schedule a meeting of the committee within ninety (90) school days after the request for reconsideration.
7. At the meeting, the reconsideration committee will complete the “Checklist for School Media (Review): Committee’s Reconsideration of Material” make a determination about the complaint.
 - A. The Media Services Coordinator will serve as the chair of the committee
 - B. The committee may use outside expertise if necessary to help in its decision-making process.
 - C. The committee will make a determination by majority vote to retain, move the materials to a different level, or remove the material.
8. The principal or designee will meet with the complainant to inform him or her of the committee’s determination.
9. The Media Services Coordinator will save any records created by the review committee.
10. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the review committee, a written appeal may be made within ten (10) school days, to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. The Assistant Superintendent shall review the complainant’s request, committee’s checklist, and any other relevant material or records to make an independent determination about the material.
11. Decisions on reconsidered materials will stand for five years before new requests for reconsideration of those items will be entertained.

The material in question will remain on media center shelves and in circulation until a formal decision is made by a review committee.

Reconsideration Committee Guidelines

Under the best professional standards, reconsideration policies ask those charged with reviewing a challenged material to set aside their personal beliefs and evaluate the work in light of the objective standards outlined in the library's materials selection policy. Listed below are some best practices for Reconsideration Committee members:

- Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to read and base your decision on these broad principles rather than in defense of individual materials. Rooted in the First Amendment, the freedom to read is essential to our democracy.
- The general acceptance of the materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and the FWCS selection policies.
- Passages or parts of the work in question should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based on the materials as a whole.
- The committee's recommendation should be an objective evaluation of the material within the scope of the District's selection policy.
- FWCS uses the definition of obscenity from Ind. Code § 35-49-2-1, which states that a material is obscene if (1) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, finds that the dominant theme of the matter or performance, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest in sex; (2) the matter or performance depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct; and (3) the matter or performance, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.
- FWCS will find a material harmful to minors established by Ind. Code § 35-49-2-2, which states that the material is harmful if it (1) it describes or represents, in any form, nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse; (2) considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest in sex of minors; (3) it is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable matter for or performance before minors; and (4) considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.



Request for Reconsideration of a Media Center Material Form

The FWCS Board of School Trustees will be legally responsible for the selection of the instructional materials: however, the Board has delegated the operational authority and responsibility for selection and evaluation of media center materials to the Media Services Coordinator and school media center staff. Reconsideration procedures have been established to address concerns regarding such materials. Completion of this form is the first step in the request for reconsideration process. If you wish to request reconsideration of media center materials, please return the completed form to the school principal.

School: _____ Date: _____

Person making request (Name) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Organization or group represented, if any: _____

Please check type of materials:

- Book (eBook) Audio Recording/Book Database
- Periodical Video (Movie) DVD
- Pamphlet Video Streaming Content App
- Kit (Game) Textbook Internet Site/Electronic Information
- Other

1. Title: _____

2. Author/Producer: _____

3. Is this resource part of the curriculum, library collection, or other? _____

2. Have you examined the entire item resource? (YES) or (NO)

If not, what parts sections did you review? _____

3. To what in this item do you object? (Please be specific: cite pages, frames, etc.) _____

4. What are its good qualities? Please comment. _____

Request for Reconsideration of a Media Center Material Form

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5. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material? _____

6. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, and/or listening to this item? _____

7. For what age group would you recommend its use? _____

8. In what publication (s) have you read a critical review of this item? Please include dates. _____

9. Check any one of the following statements that express your feeling concerning this item:

Please do not allow my child to check out this item.

It is my considered judgment that this item should be moved to a different level: MS or HS

It is my considered judgment that this item should be withdrawn from the media center.

I have reconsidered this item and believe it should remain in the media center collection.

I do not want my child to access the Internet.

I do not want my child to view this video streaming site.

10. What material, in your opinion, would be of better literary and/or educational quality and would convey a more valuable perspective of the concept under consideration? _____

(Please use the back side of this form to write your additional comments.)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

See following pages for Library Bill of Rights and Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: as Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

(Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.)

(Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.)

Request for Reconsideration of a Media Center Material Form

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Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: as 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)



Checklist for Media Center Reconsideration Committee's Review of Media Center Material: Fiction & Other Literary Forms

TITLE: _____

AUTHOR: _____

PURPOSE	COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
1. What is the purpose, theme, or message of the material? How well does the author/producer/composer accomplish this purpose?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. If the story is fiction, is it the type that has imaginative appeal and is suitable?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Will the reading and/or viewing and/or listening to material result in more compassionate understanding of human beings?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does it offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, problems of various minority groups and/or marginalized communities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are any questionable elements of the story an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONTENT	COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
1. Does a story about modern times give a realistic picture of life as it is now?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the story avoid an oversimplified view of life, one which leaves the reader with the general feeling that life is sweet and rosy or ugly and meaningless?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When factual information is part of the story, is it presented accurately?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is prejudicial appeal readily identifiable by the potential reader?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of the potential readers?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Does the material offend in some special way the sensibilities of women, a minority group, or a marginalized community by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is there preoccupation with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. If there is use of offensive language, is it appropriate to the purpose of the text?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Checklist for Media Center Reconsideration Committee's Review of Media Center Material:
Fiction & Other Literary Forms

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CONTENT	COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
10. Is the material free from derisive names and epithets that would offend minority groups and/or marginalized communities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Is the material well written or produced?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Does the material make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments:

Recommendation by the Reconsideration Committee for Treatment of Challenged Materials:

Reconsideration Committee Signatures:

Printed Name:

Printed Name:

Printed Name of
Principal/Designee:

Date:



Report on Reconsideration of a Media Center Material

TITLE: _____

AUTHOR: _____

PURPOSE		COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
1. What is the purpose, theme, or message of the material? How well does the author/producer/composer accomplish this purpose?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. If the story is fiction, is it the type that has imaginative appeal and is suitable?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AUTHENTICITY		COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
1. Is the author competent and qualified in the field?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is the material up-to-date?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are information sources well documented?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are translations and retellings faithful to the original?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
APPROPRIATENESS		COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
1. Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of district schools?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is it appropriate to the level of instruction intended?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONTENT		COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
1. Is the content of this material well presented by providing adequate scope, range, depth, and continuity?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does this material present information not otherwise available?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does this material give a new dimension or direction to its subject?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Checklist for Media Center Reconsideration Committee's Review of Media Center Material:
Nonfiction

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REVIEW	COMMENT	YES	NO	N/A
SOURCE OF REVIEW:				
1. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is it a favorable review?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments:

Recommendation by the Reconsideration Committee for Treatment of Challenged Materials:

Reconsideration Committee Signatures:

Printed Name:

Printed Name:

Printed Name of
Principal/Designee:

Date:



Report on Reconsideration of a Media Center Material

Title Under Reconsideration: _____

Internet Site/Electronic Information Under Reconsideration: _____

Video Streaming Content Under Reconsideration: _____

Author or Producer: _____

School: _____ Date: _____

Name of Complainant: _____

Parent of Student in Above School () Non-parent Resident of Above School District ()

Representative of group (identify) _____

Other _____

Members of Reconsideration Committee _____

*Attach the "Request for Reconsideration of a Media Center Material" as completed by the complainant.

*Attach the "Checklist for Media Center Material" or written response as completed by the Reconsideration Committee.

Statement of Action Taken: _____

Signature of Principal