

**LIBRARY SELECTION POLICY OF THE  
BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**I. Statement of Policy**

It is the policy of the Bristol Warren Regional School District to select library materials that support the educational goals and objectives of the district. These materials are provided in order to implement, enrich, and support the educational program for the student. It is the policy of the district to provide a wide range of library materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view, and to allow for the reconsideration of allegedly inappropriate library materials through established procedures.

**II. Selection Objectives**

School library materials will be selected by the district to support and enrich the educational program. Materials will serve both the breadth of the curriculum and the needs and interests of the faculty and students. Library materials are defined as all electronic, print, and nonprint resources, excluding textbooks, used by students and teachers for the district's educational program. In order to assure that the school library media program is an integral part of the educational program of the school it is the responsibility of the 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, and societal standards;
- to provide materials on various sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may have an opportunity to develop, under guidance, the practice of critical analysis and to make informed judgments in their daily lives;
- to provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our national heritage and the world community;
- to place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the school community.

**III. Responsibility for Selection**

Although the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee is legally responsible for the operation of the schools, the responsibility for the selection of library materials is delegated to the certified library personnel. While selection of materials involves many people, including library media specialists, teachers, students, supervisors,

administrators, and community persons, the responsibility for coordinating and recommending the selection and purchase of library materials rests with the certified library personnel.

#### **IV. Criteria for Selection**

The following general selection criteria will apply to all library materials:

- Library materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and district, and the aims and objectives of the individual schools and specific courses.
- Library materials shall meet high standards of quality in factual content, artistic and literary value, and presentation.
- Library materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of students for whom materials are selected.
- Library materials shall meet the needs and interests of students and faculty.
- Library materials shall be suitable in both physical format and appearance for their intended use.
- Library materials shall be current and up to date.
- Library materials shall be selected to help students gain an awareness of our diverse society.
- Library materials on controversial issues will be directed towards maintaining a diverse collection representing various views.

In selecting materials, the library media specialist should evaluate the existing collection and should consult reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids. The following recommended sources, as well as other professionally developed lists will be consulted in the selection of materials but selection is not limited to their listings.

#### Standard Bibliographies

- Children's Catalog
- Junior High School Catalog
- Senior High School Catalog
- Fiction Catalog
- Elementary School Library Collection

### Current Reviewing Media

- Booklist
- School Library Journal
- Horn Book Magazine
- Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
- Voice of Youth Advocates
- Wilson Library Bulletin
- Other current standard reviewing periodicals

### Gift Books and Materials

Gift books, materials and equipment are accepted with the understanding that they must meet the same selection criteria as materials purchased with the district funds. Donated items, once accepted, become the property of the Bristol Warren Regional School District.

### Weeding

Weeding is essential to maintaining a relevant, attractive collection. Materials considered for weeding should include items in poor physical condition containing obsolete subject matter, materials no longer needed to support the curriculum or student/faculty interests, or materials superseded by more current information.

## **V. Position on Intellectual Freedom**

The Bristol Warren Regional School Committee subscribes in principle to the statements of policy on library philosophy as expressed in the School Library Bill of Rights, a copy of which is appended to this policy statement (Appendix A). The principles of intellectual freedom expressed in the School Library Bill of Rights are inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. In the event library materials are questioned, the principles of intellectual freedom shall be defended.

## **VI. Library Procedures for Dealing with Challenged Materials**

### **I. Statement of Policy**

Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge library resources used in the district's educational program on the basis of appropriateness. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the schools and community who are not directly involved in the selection process. Citizens objecting to specific materials used in the media center are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the principal prior to pursuing a formal complaint.

II. Procedure for handling challenged materials

1. The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain to the questioner the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resource (Appendix B).
2. The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the education program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the resource.
3. If the questioner wishes to file a formal challenge, a copy of the selection policy of the Bristol Warren Regional School District and a Request for Reconsideration Form (Appendix C) will be handed or mailed to the party concerned by the principal. The challenged materials remain on the shelves during the review process. If the Reconsideration Form has not been received by the principal within two weeks, it shall be considered closed.

III. Request for Formal Reconsideration

A. Preliminary Procedures

1. Each school shall keep on hand and make available Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Forms. All formal objections to library materials must be made on these forms.
2. The Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form shall be signed by the questioner and filed with the principal or someone so designated by the principal.
3. The Superintendent shall be informed of the formal complaint.
4. The request for reconsideration shall be referred to a review committee at the school level for reevaluation of the library material.

B. Review Committee

1. Upon receipt of a completed objection form the principal shall appoint a review committee to consider the complaint. The committee shall include at least one administrator, teacher, library media specialist, and parent.
2. The committee shall meet to discuss the material, following the guidelines set forth in the selection policy and shall prepare a report on the material containing their recommendations on disposition of the matter. (Appendix D & E)
3. The principal shall notify complainant of the decision and send a formal report and recommendation to the Superintendent. In answering the complainant, the principal shall explain the book selection system, and cite the authorities used in reaching decisions. If the committee decides to keep the work that caused the complaint, the complainant shall be given an explanation. If the complaint is valid, the principal will acknowledge it and make recommended changes.
4. If the complainant is still not satisfied, he/she may ask the Superintendent to present an appeal to the School Committee which shall make a final determination of the issue. The School committee may seek assistance from outside organizations such as the American Library Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, etc., in making its determination.

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BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

