

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 111
WATERTOWN-MAYER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

606.5 LIBRARY MATERIALS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction and to delegate responsibility for the selection and reconsideration of library materials.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The school board recognizes that library materials serve as a vital component of a student’s education, broadening and complementing the curriculum and catering to the diverse interests and needs of individual students. Therefore, decisions regarding the selection and reconsideration of library materials should be handled differently than those concerning textbooks and instructional materials.

To ensure that library materials effectively fulfill this vital role, the school board delegates to the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee the responsibility of managing a process for selecting library materials. The selection process shall be led by professionally trained school district personnel, who shall acknowledge that the school board retains the ultimate authority over the selection of library materials. Parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s access to library materials.

[NOTE: The school board may choose to revise the General Statement of Purpose.]

III. DEFINITIONS

A. “Library” is the school district resource that holds the library collection that serves the information and independent reading needs of students and supports the curriculum needs of teachers and staff. The term “library” includes a school library media center. The term also includes access to electronic materials.

For school districts with multiple school buildings, the term “library” refers to the resource within a specific school building.

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.991, states that a school district or charter school library or school library media center provides equitable and free access to students, teachers, and administrators and that a school library or school library media center must have the following characteristics:

1. ensures every student has equitable access to resources and locate, access, and use resources that are organized and cataloged;

2. has a collection development plan that includes but is not limited to materials selection and deselection, a challenged materials procedure, and an intellectual and academic freedom statement;
 3. is housed in a central location that provides an environment for expanded learning and supports a variety of student interests;
 4. has technology and Internet access; and
- B. “Library collection” consists of the library materials available to students.
- C. “Library materials” are the books, periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, films, prints, documents, videotapes, subscription content, electronic and digital materials (including e-books, audiobooks, and databases), and related items made available to students in a school building or through access to electronic materials. This term does not include materials made available to students as part of the curriculum.
- D. “Library media specialist” is a paraprofessional assigned to lead the building media center. The library media specialist shall be designated to provide information and technology literacy skills instruction, to lead, collaborate, and consult with other classroom teachers to integrate information and technology literacy skills with content teaching, and to administer media center operations, programming, and resources.

[NOTE: The specific titles of the school district’s library staff should be used for this definition and substituted for “library media specialist” throughout this model policy. Please note the new 2024 law in Article IV regarding administration of selection and reconsideration procedures.]

IV. OBJECTIVES OF MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

The inclusion of material does not imply the ideas presented in the material are endorsed by Watertown-Mayer Public School (the “District”) personnel, students, employees, or parents. The District may express concerns about materials used and issues explored in educational programs. Whenever a concern is expressed, the District will respond with a defined process.

To ensure the District’s media center materials remain an integral part of the educational program, the following objectives are adopted:

- A. To provide materials that enrich and support curricula and meet varied personal needs, interests, and abilities.
- B. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in knowledge, literary appreciation, and artistic expression.
- C. To provide materials with multiple viewpoints under guidance users develop critical analysis skills that apply to real-world concepts and experiences.

- D. To provide materials that realistically represent a pluralistic society and reflect the contributions made by diverse groups and individuals.
- E. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive media collection that caters to all users.
- F. To encourage life-long learning through the use of the media center.

V. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

- A. The school board recognizes the expertise of the District's professional staff and the vital role they play in selecting library materials.
- B. While recommendations from administrators, faculty members, students, parents, and other community members may be considered, the final responsibility for selecting library materials shall rest with the library media specialist.
- C. The procedures for selection and reconsideration set forth in this policy will be administered by:
 - 1. a licensed library media specialist under Minnesota Rules, part 8710.4550;
 - 2. an individual with a master's degree in library science or library and information science; or
 - 3. a professional librarian or a person trained in library collection management.
- D. The school board may decline to purchase, lend, or shelve or remove access to library materials legitimately based on:
 - 1. practical reasons, including but not limited to shelf space limitations, rare or antiquarian status, damage, or obsolescence;
 - 2. legitimate pedagogical concerns, including but not limited to the appropriateness of potentially sensitive topics for the library's intended audience, the selection of library materials for a curated collection, or the likelihood of causing a material and substantial disruption of the work and discipline of the school; or
 - 3. compliance with state or federal law.

[NOTE: In 2024, the Minnesota legislature enacted a new law—Minnesota Statutes 134.51—that includes the new provisions above.]

[NOTE: Minnesota Statutes, section 134.51, cited above, recognizes the school board's authority to make decisions regarding library materials. Through adoption of this policy, the school board delegates selection and reconsideration of library materials decision making as set forth in this policy.]

VI. SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

- A. Selection Criteria: The library materials selection process should result in a library collection that, when considered as a whole, is consistent with the following criteria:
1. Library materials shall align with and support the overarching educational objectives of the state, the District, and the aims and objectives of individual schools and specific courses;
 2. Library materials shall be carefully chosen to enrich and support the curriculum while fostering a love of reading by catering to the diverse interests of the individual student's needs and interests;
 3. Library materials shall not be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, sex, gender, or political views of the writer;
 4. Library materials shall be appropriate to and reflect the needs, ages, maturity level, emotional development, ability levels, learning styles, social development, background, diversity, and needs and interests of the students for whom the materials were selected;
 5. Library materials shall meet high standards of quality in one or more of these categories (presented alphabetically):
 - a. Artistic quality and/or literary style;
 - b. Authenticity;
 - c. Critical thinking;
 - d. Educational significance;
 - e. Factual content;
 - f. High interest for the intended audience; and
 - g. Readability.
 6. The selection of library materials shall conform to the constraints of the school district budget.
- B. The media specialist shall consult sources and specialists experienced in library materials collections appropriate for the building's students and who are reputable, experienced, unbiased, and professionally trained in school library materials.
- C. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall be responsible for keeping the school board informed of progress on review and selection of each building's library materials.

D. Library materials that are outdated, inaccurate, no longer useful for curricular support or reading enrichment, or have not been utilized for an extended time may be removed. Library materials in poor physical condition may be removed or replaced as determined by the library media specialist or the principal.

E. Gifts and Donations of Library Materials:

Materials offered for donation or gifted to a school library may be accepted if they comply with the library collection selection criteria and are approved by the library media specialist. The District's libraries welcome donations of books and other resource materials from individuals and organizations, but also reserve the right to decline to accept library materials that do not meet the criteria for selection. In addition, financial donations to benefit the District's libraries will be accepted with the understanding that funds will be used to purchase materials needed for libraries based on the needs of the individual schools.

VII. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ACCESS TO SPECIFIC LIBRARY MATERIAL

A parent or guardian may submit a written request to restrict their child's access to specific library materials. The school shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate this request. However, this type of request will not result in the removal of specific library collection material from the library or restrictions upon any other student accessing specific library materials.

VIII. RECONSIDERATION OF SPECIFIC LIBRARY MATERIAL

A. The school board seeks to uphold students' access to library materials that meet the educational goals and selection criteria set forth in this policy.

B. A school district employee, student, a parent, or guardian of a school district student may request reconsideration of specific library material based on appropriateness concerns. Access to the material in question shall not be restricted until the procedures listed below have been fully completed and a decision to remove or restrict the materials has been made.

C. Informal Request for Reconsideration of Specific Library Material

1. Requests for reconsideration of the specific library material shall be directed to the library media specialist and the building principal. The building principal and the library media specialist shall assume responsibility for informally processing the request.

2. The building principal and/or the library media specialist shall explain to the individual who submitted the request. The explanation shall include the particular selection criteria that the material in question met to be included in the library as curriculum support or as an independent reading choice for students in the building.

3. If the request is not resolved informally, the principal shall notify the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. The requestor will have an option to initiate a Formal Request for Reconsideration of Materials.

D. Formal Request for Reconsideration of Specific Library Collection Material

1. A Formal Request for Reconsideration of specific library material is initiated upon submission of a completed [Reconsideration of Materials form \(606.5F\)](#). The form must be completed in its entirety for each work subject to a request for reconsideration. The principal shall notify the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee and the library media specialist of receipt of a completed Reconsideration of Materials Form.

If specific library material is the subject of a Formal Request for Reconsideration and a final decision is made to retain the specific library material, then the specific library material shall not be subject to additional requests for reconsideration for three years following the date of final resolution of the initial Reconsideration of Materials Form.

2. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall appoint a Library Materials Review Committee (Review Committee) as needed. This anonymous committee shall include:
 - a. One principal;
 - b. Two teachers;
 - c. One library media specialist (or district media specialist or public librarian if the school district does not have a library media specialist)
 - d. Two members of the District's community with no direct connection with the request for reconsideration;
 - e. Two student representatives (as appropriate to the specific request); and
 - f. The Director of Teaching and Learning will facilitate the Committee as a non-voting member
3. The Review Committee shall establish a date, not more than 30 working days from the receipt of the formal Reconsideration of Materials request form, upon which it will discuss the request and whether the specific library collection material conforms to the selection criteria in this policy.
4. The Review Committee will follow the process below:
 - a. The Review Committee will read, listen, or view the material entirely. The Review Committee shall form opinions based on the material as a whole (not on passages pulled out of context).

- b. The Review Committee will research general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended lists.
 - c. The Review Committee will discuss the following possible courses of action for the resource in question:
 - 1. Retain the resource for unrestricted use by students;
 - 2. Move the resource to a different level or location; or
 - 3. Remove the resource entirely.
 - d. The Review Committee will reach a consensus by a simple majority (more than half of the votes cast) vote. Voting will be by anonymous ballot.
 - e. The Director of Teaching and Learning on behalf of the Review Committee will present a written conclusion and recommendation to the Superintendent. The complainant and faculty member(s), as appropriate, will be notified of the Committee's decision.
6. The requestor shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Review Committee.
- a. If the requestor wants to appeal the decision of the Review Committee, they should contact the Superintendent in writing within 5 days of the Review Committee's decision.
 - b. The Superintendent will consult with a non-participating third-party to review the process of the original Reconsideration of Materials request. The decision of the non-participating third party and Superintendent will be final. The requestor shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee to the school board.

VIII. CHALLENGE REPORT

Upon the completion of a content challenge or reconsideration process in accordance with this policy, the school board must submit a report of the challenge to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education that includes:

- A. the title, author, and other relevant identifying information about the material being challenged;
- B. the date, time, and location of any public hearing held on the challenge in question, including minutes or transcripts;
- C. the result of the challenge or reconsideration request; and
- D. accurate and timely information on who from the school district the Department of Education may contact with questions or follow-up.

[NOTE: This article was enacted in 2024 by the Minnesota legislature.]

IX. PROHIBITION ON RETALIATION

The school district may not discriminate against or discipline an employee for complying with Minnesota Statutes, section 134.51.

[NOTE: This article was enacted in 2024 by the Minnesota legislature.]

Adopted/Revised/Reviewed:

Adopted: January 22, 2024
Revised: July 22, 2024
Revised: December 16, 2024

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 9 (Compulsory Instruction)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.02 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.09 (School Board Responsibilities)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.991 (Public School Libraries and Media Centers)
Minn. Stat. § 134.51 (Access to Library Materials and Rights Protected)
Minn. Rules Part 8710.4550 (Library Media Specialists)
Bd. of Educ., Island Trees Union Free Sch. Dist. No. 26 v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853 (1982)
Virginia State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624, 642 (1943)

Cross References:

Independent School District #111 Policy 524 (Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)
Independent School District #111 Policy 606 (Textbooks and Instructional Materials)

