

## RSU #63

- a. **NEPN/NSBA Code:** IJJ
- b. **Title:** Instructional and Library-Media Materials Selection
- c. **Author:**
- d. **Replaces Policy:**
- e. **Date Approved:** 05/17/2021 RSU #63
- f. **Previously Approved:** 09/22/2014
- g. **Policy Expiration:** Review as Needed
- h. **Responsible for Review:** Policy Committee
- i. **Date Reviewed:** 05/03/2021 Policy Committee
- j. **References:** 20-A MRSA §§ 1001 (10-A); 1055 (4); 4002 Ch. 125 §§ 9.01, 9.03 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rules) P.L. 107-110 § 1061 Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

**Cross Reference:** Policy IJJ-E – Challenge of Instructional Materials Form

### k. Narrative:

The RSU 63 Board of Directors (the Board) is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the schools within RSU 63 (the District), including the provision of instructional materials and maintenance of library-media resources that support the school system's curriculum.

While the Board retains its authority to approve the selection of instructional materials, it recognizes the educational expertise of its professional staff and the need for such staff to be involved in the recommendation of instructional materials. The Board delegates responsibility for the selection of instructional materials and library-media resources to the professionally trained personnel employed by RSU 63, subject to the criteria and procedures for selection and the Board's policy on challenged materials as described below.

- I. With the assistance of professional staff, the Superintendent will establish a system for selection of instructional materials, including procedures to establish an orderly review and recommendation of instructional materials. The Superintendent will be responsible for overseeing the purchase of instructional materials within budgetary parameters set by the Board. The Superintendent will report on progress made in aligning instructional materials with curriculum development in support of the content standards contained in Maine's system of Learning Results.
- II. Definitions:
  - A. "Instructional materials" include textbooks and other print materials, software, and other electronic materials, online/Internet resources (including access), and supplies and other materials to support instruction in subject areas and implementation of the system of Learning Results.

- B.** “Library-media resources” include books, print materials, online/Internet resources (including access), multimedia materials and information technology that, as part of the library-media program, support the schools’ system curriculum.

**III.** Objectives of Selection:

The Board recognizes it is the primary objective of instructional materials to implement and support the curriculum, and of library-media resources to extend and enrich the educational programs of the schools. Quality instructional materials and library-media resources are essential to student learning. In preparing students to meet the content standards of the Learning Results, in supporting the achievement of educational goals and objectives of each school unit, and in providing enrichment opportunities that expand students’ interests and contribute to their desire for lifelong learning, it is the responsibility of the instructional program and the library-media centers of the schools to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.

**IV.** Criteria for Selection:

Instructional and library-media materials selected should:

- A.** Support achievement of the content standards of the Learning Results.
- B.** Support the goals and objectives of the districts’ educational programs.
- C.** Enrich and support the curriculum.
- D.** Take into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
- E.** Foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and varied opinions.
- F.** Give comprehensive, accurate, and balanced representation to minorities and women in history, science, leadership, and the arts, and acknowledge the contributions of ethnic, religious, and cultural groups to our American heritage.
- G.** Present a balance of opposing sides of controversial issues to enable students to develop a capability for critical analysis.
- H.** Stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
- I.** Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent decisions in their daily lives.
- J.** Respect the constraints of district budgets.

**VI.** Procedures for Selection:

- A.** It will be the highest priority to meet the needs of the individual schools, based on knowledge of the curriculum and the existing collections of instructional and library-media materials. Basic learning materials, i.e., those that are the predominate instructional materials used by most members of the class, which are used for a significant portion of the course, or receive major emphasis during a course, or are essential to student achievement of content standards of the Learning Results are to take priority in the selection process.
- B.** Before recommending materials for purchase, professional staff should evaluate the existing collection, and consult reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and specialists from all department and/or grade levels.

- C. Social studies and science textbooks should not be older than 5 years unless up-to-date supplemental instructional materials are also available.
- D. Whenever possible, purchase of non-print materials and multi-media, Internet and technology resources will be made only after evaluation by the appropriate professional staff. Reviewing aids may be used in lieu of personal evaluation.
- E. Multiple copies of outstanding and much-in-demand materials should be purchased as needed. Worn or missing standard items should be replaced periodically. Out-of-date or no-longer-useful materials should be withdrawn from the collection/circulation.

**VII. Donated Materials:**

Gift materials are to be evaluated by the same criteria as purchased materials, and are to be accepted or rejected by those criteria and in accordance with the Boards policies on gifts and donations.

**VIII. Parental Authority:**

- A. A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the curriculum. The Superintendent will be responsible for developing and implementing procedures for providing access to instructional materials within a reasonable time after such request is made.
- B. The Board recognizes the final authority as to what materials an individual student will be exposed rests with that student's parents/guardians. However, at no time will the wishes of one student's parents restrict his/her reading or viewing of a particular item infringe on other parents' rights to permit their students to read or view the same material.
- C. Library-media center materials will not be removed from the collection because of criticism except in accordance with Board policy.

**IX. Challenged Materials:**

Despite the care taken to select materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of persons who select the materials, the Boards recognize that objections may be raised occasionally by students, parents, school staff, or community members.

In the event a complaint is made, the following procedures will apply:

- A. The complaint will be heard first by the person providing the materials in question.
- B. If the complaint is not resolved, the complaint will be referred to the building administrator and requested to fill out the "Instructional and Library-Media Materials Challenge Form" (refer to Policy IJJ-E). A copy of the form will be forwarded to the Superintendent.
- C. The Superintendent will appoint a committee composed of the following persons

to review the complaint: one principal at the appropriate grade level; one librarian/media specialist; one classroom teacher; and one community member.

- D.** The review committee will: read and examine the materials referred to them; check general acceptance of materials by reading reviews; weigh values and faults against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages or portions pulled out of context; meet to discuss the material and to prepare a written report on it.
- E.** The report of the committee will be forwarded to the Superintendent who will inform the complainant of the results.
- F.** No materials will be removed from use until the review committee has made a final decision.

#### **X.** Appeal Process

The review committee's decision may be appealed to the Board. The Board may set aside a portion of a regular meeting or call a special meeting for the purpose of receiving testimony from representatives of the various points of view. The material in question shall be:

- A.** Reviewed objectively and in its full content;
- B.** Evaluated in terms of the needs and interests of students, school curriculum, and community; and
- C.** Considered in the light of the criteria for initial selection and purpose as provided herein.

The Board will announce its decision in writing and not later than the conclusion of the next regular meeting of the Board following its receipt of said testimony.