Houston County Board of Education

Monitoring:	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:
Review: Annually, in November	**Library Materials**	**4.403**	**06/09/25**
		Rescinds:	Issued: **08/08/22; 01/08/24; 08/12/24**

General

The school media specialist shall be responsible for library collection development. He/she shall post the list of library materials online. Library materials shall be reviewed to ensure the content aligns with state law. Prior to the purchase of new materials, librarians shall review the age and maturity level along with the reading level of the selected items for suitability. [1] A list of new materials shall be reviewed by the Principal/Designee.

The Principal/Designee shall be responsible for periodically reviewing the district's library collection in line with the standards established below. Any materials found to be out of alignment with the standards shall be removed, and this action shall be documented in writing and presented to the Director of Schools/Designee and the Board.

STANDARDS[2]

The library collection shall adhere to the following criteria:

1. Materials shall be suitable for and consistent with the educational mission of the school;

2. Materials shall be appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who may access them. The determining factor will be based on an assessment of any mature themes or content (i.e., violence, sexual content, vulgar language, substance abuse);

3. Materials shall contain literary, historical, scientific, and/or artistic value and merit;

4. The collection as a whole shall offer a variety of viewpoints; and

5. Materials shall not be removed on the sole grounds that the item is religious.

Any materials that meet the following criteria shall be removed and excluded from the district's library collection:

1. Contains nudity, descriptions or depictions of sexual excitement, sexual conduct, excess violence, or sadomasochistic abuse as defined in state law[3];

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2. Are patently offensive as defined in state law; or

3. Appeal to the prurient interest as defined in state law.

The Board shall be notified when any library materials are challenged or removed pursuant to this policy.

COMPLAINTS[4]

If a complaint is made by an employee, student, or parent/guardian, the person receiving the complaint shall:

1. Inform the complainant of the selection procedures and make no commitments.

2. Request the complainant to submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form.

3. Inform the principal (and other appropriate personnel).

4. Keep challenged materials available for use during the reconsideration process.

Upon receipt of the completed form, the Principal/Designee shall notify the Director of Schools/Designee. The Principal/Designee may request review of the challenged materials by an ad hoc materials review committee within thirty (30) school days. If the Principal/Designee appoints a review committee, it should include certified library media personnel, representatives from classroom teachers, and one or more parents.

After receiving the challenged materials, the following steps should occur:

1. Read, view, or listen to the contested material in its entirety;

2. Check general acceptance of the material by reading recognized and evaluative reviews;

3. Determine the extent to which the material is appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who have access to the materials and whether the material is suitable for, and consistent with, the educational mission of the school; and

4. Complete the appropriate Checklist for Reconsideration of Library Materials, judging the material for its strength and value.

The Principal/Designee shall present a recommendation to the Director of Schools. The Director of Schools/Designee shall assess the findings along with the recommendation of the Principal/Designee and present a recommendation to the Board.

The Board shall evaluate the recommendations of the Principal/Designee and the Director of Schools/Designee along with the material to determine whether it is appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who have access to the materials and whether the material is suitable for, and consistent with, the educational mission of the school. The Board shall review the findings and affirm, overturn, or modify the decision within sixty (60) days from which the feedback was received.

REMOVAL OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

If it is determined that the material is not appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who have access to them or is not suitable for, and consistent with, the educational mission of the school, the material shall be removed from the library collection.

Legal References

1. *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (1982); TCA 49-6-3803
2. TCA 49-6-3803(a),(b); Public Acts of 2025, Chapter No. 270
3. TCA 39-17-901
4. TCA 49-6-3803(e), (f)

Cross References

Textbooks and Instructional Materials 4.400
School and System Websites 4.407
Controversial Materials 4.801