

Policies

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Mission, Values, Vision

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Westerly Public Schools Library Media Department is to provide activities and resources that will assist students and staff in becoming effective and discriminating users of information, developing a pattern of lifelong learning, and fostering a love of reading. Students' education will enable all to become responsible and informed citizens making meaningful contributions to society.

Values:

The WPS Library Media Centers believe in...

- responding to the needs of students and faculty while recognizing the uniqueness of the individuals we serve.
- providing access to the world via technology and text.
- inspiring creativity and problem solving.
- encouraging a lifelong love of reading.
- training students and staff to become effective and responsible users of information because more information does not always equal understanding.
- maintaining high expectations for ourselves and our students.
- empowering students to meet their own information needs.
- gathering organized, well-curated resources that meet the needs of students and faculty.
- collecting materials from multiple points of view, cultural standpoints, lifestyles and circumstances both current and historical and not excluded on origin, background, or based on views.
- training library staff dedicated to developing skill and ability with belief that all students can learn.
- supporting and enriching students and faculty.
- providing a facility/environment where students can pursue personal interests.
- adhering to values in ALA Bill of Rights.

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Vision:

We will...

- build foundations for high achievement, college and career readiness, and lifelong information literacy through collaboration with faculty and administration.
- collect resources that are efficiently and effectively dispersed.
- promote Information Literacy and Digital Citizenship.
- change our facilities and learning spaces to adapt and respond to continued change.
- integrate new technologies and multiple pathways to information.
- advocate for fair, adequate, and equitable funding.
- communicate effectively with students, parents, and colleagues.
- provide equitable access to technology.
- encourage intellectual curiosity by providing students with choice by curating multiple resources with a wide range of content in varied formats.
- ensure an equity of access to information and opportunity.

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Goals and Objectives from [ALA Library Bill of Rights](#) and [RI Freedom to Read Act](#):

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Libraries serve as centers for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas. 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 provide protection against censorship and 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.

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Selection Policy

Responsibility for Selection

The WPS Superintendent and School Committee are legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the WPS. The district policy delegates the responsibility for selecting library materials to the certified school library media specialist. These materials are defined as both print and non print materials. The final responsibility for recommending purchasing lies with the professionally trained and certified library media specialist.

Criteria for Selection of Materials according to the American Library Association

- Support and enrich the curriculum and/or students' personal interests and learning
- Meet high standards in literary, artistic and aesthetic quality; technical aspects; and physical format
- Be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development of student for whom the materials are selected for
- Earn favorable review in standard reviewing sources and/or favorable recommendations based on examination by a professional person
- Exhibit a high degree of potential user appeal and interest
- Represent differing viewpoints on controversial issues
- Provide a global perspective and promote diversity by including materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures
- The selected materials will reflect an interest in, and portray the changes and contributions made by the diverse cultural, ethnic and religious groups of our society. These materials will assist the student in gaining an awareness and understanding of the contributions made by a variety of constituencies
- Include a variety of sources in physical and virtual formats including print and non-print

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- The policy shall be updated as the commissioner of elementary and secondary education, school superintendent and certified library media specialist deem necessary.

In selecting materials for inclusion in the library media center, the library media specialist will evaluate the existing collection and curriculum needs. They will work to balance curriculum needs with student personal interest and learning. They will consult appropriate reviewing sources including but not limited to the following:

- Association for Library Services to Children - Notable Children's Books
- Booklist
- School Library Journal
- Library Journal
- NY Times Book Review
- Horn Book
- ALA Award Winners

When appropriate recommendations will be solicited from subject specialists, faculty, staff, administrators, students, parents and qualified consultants. Selection is an ongoing process and includes the removal of material that are no longer appropriate or relevant, as well as the replacement of lost, missing or worn materials still with educational value and the addition and expansion of collections.

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Collection Evaluation

The collection will be reviewed and evaluated by a certified library media specialist. Collections will be reviewed taking into account qualitative and quantitative measurements. Some measurement tools may include curriculum mapping, circulation statistics, collection statistics, direct examination. These measures will ensure that the collections are relevant, effective and appropriate to each school's needs. Library media specialists will conduct such evaluations since they know their community, curriculum, and collection.

Weeding will be necessary when:

1. Item contains incorrect or out-of-date information
2. Item is in poor condition physically
3. The library owns duplicate copies and the item is no longer in demand
4. Item has an updated later edition
5. Item has not circulated in 5 years
6. Item is no longer pertinent to curriculum or students' interests.

Any item that is weeded due to poor condition should be replaced or repaired if possible.

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Budgets and Funding Sources

Financial resources are necessary for the purchase of books, print and non-print materials; including but not limited to books, magazines, database subscriptions, audio visual materials, digital resources etc.

Other Funding Sources:

Other sources of funding may be sought including but not limited to the following:

- Grants
- PTO
- Book Fairs
- Lost Materials fees

Monies collected from these sources should be earmarked specifically to the library which raised funds. These funds should not cause a reduction in the general library budget.

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Circulation Policy

Individual library media centers may create their own circulation policies based on the size and need of their school.

Confidentiality

The Westerly Public School District believes that all library patrons have a right to privacy guaranteed by the United States Constitution. The library media specialist will protect the privacy of their patrons including students, teachers and parents. No person who works in the library may divulge any details about materials used by a patron. Patron records are to be kept confidential. Patrons are to be informed personally when they have late or overdue materials. Staff may help to expedite the process of retrieving late items.

[Rhode Island General Law 11 - 18 - 32 \(a\)](#) states:

It shall be unlawful for any person to reveal, transmit, publish, or disseminate in any manner, any records which would identify the names and addresses of individuals, with the titles or nature of video films, records, cassettes, or the like, which they purchased, leased, rented, or borrowed, from libraries, book stores, video stores, or record and cassette shops or any retailer or distributor of those products, whether or not the identities and listings are kept in a remote computing service or electronic storage or the disclosure is made through or by a remote computing service. It shall not be unlawful to make disclosures to other employees of the library or business incident to the normal course of their work or pursuant to lawful compulsion.

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Procedure for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Occasionally objections to a selection are made by someone in the school or in the community at large. No material shall be removed from circulation until a final decision has been made. The procedure is as follows:

- The principal will request that the concerned party will meet informally with the principal and designees. The faculty using this material will also be involved. The school's selection policy will be reviewed with the complainant. If the complainant still finds the material unacceptable alternate reading materials will be provided.
- If the matter is not resolved they may fill out a [Request for Reconsideration of School Library Books](#).
- The school library media specialist will notify the principal, assistant superintendent, superintendent and district library media specialists of request for reconsideration.
- Within 10 working days of the receipt of the completed [Request for Reconsideration of School Library Books form](#), the school library media specialist along with the assistant superintendent and district library media specialists will appoint a committee to review the material in question.
- The committee will include the following:
 - The superintendent or superintendent's designee
 - The principal of the school in which the form is submitted or the principal's designee
 - District certified library media specialist employed at the school in which the form is submitted
 - A representative of the school committee
 - A grade appropriate teacher provided the teacher selected is not the individual who submitted the form.

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- The committee will:
 - Have read the book in its entirety prior to discussion
 - Evaluate the material in light of the WPS Selection policy
 - Reach a decision as to the appropriateness of the material for the school library collection
 - Within 30 school days of appointment, make a written recommendation to retain the material in question or remove it from the collection
- The Superintendent will review the report and inform all involved parties of the decision
- If the concerned individual is not in agreement with the committee's decision an appeal can be made to the Westerly School Committee within thirty days. The School Committee shall review the committee's report and issue a final recommendation along with a written statement of reasons for:
 - (i) The removal, limitation, or non-removal of a library material;
 - (ii) Any final determination that is contrary to the recommendations of the review committee; and
 - (iii) (The written statement of reasons shall be posted on the school committees Internet website in a prominent and easily accessible location within thirty (30) days of the determination.
- The review committee, when conducting a review pursuant to this section and a school committee deciding an appeal of the review committee, shall consider the following standards for review:
 - (i) Recognize that library material should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all students and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole;
 - (ii) Acknowledge that library material shall not be removed from a school library because of the origin, background, or views of the library material or those contributing to its creation;
 - (iii) Recognize the importance of school libraries as centers for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas;
 - (iv) Promote the free expression and free access to ideas by students by prohibiting the censorship of library material; and
 - (v) Acknowledge that a school library media specialist is professionally trained to curate and develop the school library collection that provides students

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with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate library material available to schools;

- Any staff member of a school library, including a librarian employed by a school, shall 17 be immune from civil and criminal liability arising from good faith actions performed pursuant to this chapter.

Declaratory and injunctive relief – RIGL § 29-9-5

- A librarian who has been subjected to discipline, termination, or threats of discipline or termination for refusing to censor library materials in violation of policies established pursuant to this chapter may seek relief against a government body in any court of competent jurisdiction for declaratory and injunctive relief including, but not limited to, reinstatement, back pay, restoration of benefits, and such other equitable relief as may be appropriate and necessary to make the employee whole.
- An individual with a vested interest in a school or public library may seek relief in any court of competent jurisdiction for declaratory and injunctive relief against a government body that enforces censorship of library materials in violation of policies established pursuant to this chapter.
- A student, or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), may only challenge censorship of library materials relating to a school that the student attends.
- An author whose library materials have been subjected to censorship may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction for declaratory and injunctive relief against any government body that enforces censorship of library materials in violation of policies established pursuant to this chapter
- Any school or library employee acting pursuant to direct orders from a municipal, state or federal government authority shall not be liable for censorship.

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Documents from American Library Association

[Library Bill of Rights](#)

[Freedom to Read Statement](#)

[Code of Ethics](#)

[Request for Reconsideration Form](#)

Adopted:	February 5, 1997
Revised:	October 15, 2002
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Citizen Request for Reconsideration Form

book
 record
 pamphlet
 filmstrip

magazine
 movie
 kit
 cassette

software
 TV program
 video
 other

_____ (specify)

Author: _____

Hardcover: _____

Paperback: _____

Title: _____

Publisher: _____

Request Initiated by: _____

Phone #: _____

Address: _____

Town, State _____

Zip Code: _____

Complainant represents Self _____ Organization(name) _____

1. What would you like your school to do about this material?
 - a. Do not assign to my child
 - b. Withdraw it from all students as well as my child
 - c. Add the material to the collection

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2. Do you have a child in this school? _____

3. What is your concern regarding this material? Please be specific, cite pages or examples.

4. Why do you believe this material is appropriate or inappropriate for school use?

5. What do you feel would be the result of reading, listening to, or viewing this material?

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6. For what age group would you recommend this material?

7. How would this material be of value to the library collection?

8. Have you read the **entire** book or listened to the entire media?

9. How did you become aware of this material?

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10. Are you aware of the judgment of the material by literary or educational professionals?

If yes, did these sources agree with your opinion? Please list sources you read or reviewed.

11. What do you believe is the theme of this material?

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12. Is there any other material of equal literary and artistic quality you would recommend that would convey as valuable a picture, and perspective of our civilization, or convey the same concepts, or provide the same enjoyment?

13. Any additional thoughts or comments would be welcome
