

Fort Worth ISD Library Media Services Library Materials Selection Criteria and Collection Development Guidelines

Proposed Revision to Align with SB 13

Aligned with Board Policy EFB(LOCAL)

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Policy Alignment Note: This document implements Board policy EFB(LOCAL). Where any procedure conflicts with EFB(LOCAL), the Board policy controls.

1. Purpose

The purpose of these Guidelines is to ensure Fort Worth ISD provides a wide range of library materials for students and faculty that support student achievement and present varying levels of difficulty, diversity of appeal, and a variety of points of view. These Guidelines also provide standards for collection development and for the selection and evaluation of library materials.

2. Definitions & Scope

For purposes of these Guidelines, “library materials” is defined by law and includes printed and electronic acquisitions, online catalogs, and other ancillary or supplementary materials maintained in a campus library. The District’s library collection development standards apply to all materials available for use or display, including materials in campus libraries, classroom libraries, online catalogs, library mobile applications used in the District, and any other library catalog a student may access.

3. Governance & Roles

3.1 School Library Advisory Council (SLAC)

The Board has established a School Library Advisory Council (SLAC). At its first meeting each year, the SLAC selects a chair. The SLAC meets at least two times each year and as needed to consider recommendations from District staff and fulfill its statutory duties.

3.2 Training

The District ensures SLAC members, librarians, professional library staff, and other designated professional staff are trained or receive information on proper collection development standards.

3.3 Administrative Procedures

The Superintendent develops administrative procedures to ensure library collections comply with applicable law, library standards, and the District's collection development purpose and goals.

4. Collection Development Standards (Policy Requirements)

Library collections shall:

- Present multiple viewpoints related to controversial issues.
- Provide a wide range of background information that will enable students to make intelligent decisions in their daily lives.
- Include accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources.
- Have a high degree of potential user appeal and interest.
- Offer a global perspective that promotes equity of access, including print and nonprint materials such as electronic and multimedia, to meet the needs of individual learners.
- Represent diverse viewpoints and cultural groups of the state and their contributions to the state, the nation, and the world, to ensure the collection embodies the background of all students.

Book Selection Criteria:

The existing book selection criteria below will continue to guide decisions. The School Library Advisory Council (SLAC) will review book titles and make recommendations to the Board of Managers, which holds final approval authority.

Criteria	Purpose
Integral to the instructional program.	Books in the library are designed to support content knowledge, process skills, or both. Books whose main subjects do not appear directly in the TEKS are designed to support the development of reading and thinking skills. There is a correlation between interest-based reading selections and academic performance. Research shows that students who read books they find interesting read more often and perform better in reading than their peers. Library books cover a wide range of topics, themes, genres, formats, and characters, so all students can find

	books that interest them and help develop their reading skills.
Reflect the interests and needs of students and faculty	Librarians must consider factors such as circulation data, student, faculty, and parent suggestions, curricular topics, and current events to identify needs. Not all books will be of interest to all students, but all students should find something that interests them and see themselves and others reflected in the materials.
Alignment: Appropriate for students' reading levels and understanding	<p>Library materials require two professional reviews for at least two of the grade levels served (or a level below), except for early childhood campuses, which may purchase books with reviews covering birth through 1st grade. Acceptable professional library review sources include Booklist, the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, Horn Book, School Library Journal, and VOYA (ceased publication but may be used for older titles). Any professional curricular review sites may also be used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Middle Grade (MG) novels are traditionally geared toward ages 9-13. ● YA may only be purchased at secondary campuses. Be sure the characters' ages match your students' ages. ● Materials rated Adult may only be purchased at high schools and must be read by 2 librarians at 2 different schools before they can be purchased or circulated. ● If reviews contain age recommendations that span multiple levels (e.g., 5-8th grade or YA), consider the ages of the characters and the book's theme(s) to determine whether it is an appropriate fit for your students. ● If three or more professional reviews are available, use the most common age range.
Literary/Artistic Value/Merit	A book needs to have at least two professional reviews that favorably address the quality of the work. Use of language, character, and plot development, illustrations or photographs, reader engagement or readability, and technical qualities all speak to literary or artistic value and merit.

Balanced Collection Representing Various Views	Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people in the library's community. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation. A balanced presentation of opposing issues in nonfiction must be presented either in a single book or across multiple books in a library.
Accuracy and Clarity	A book needs to have at least two professional reviews that favorably address the book's accuracy and clarity. The author's reputation, potential bias, credentials, and approach to subject matter may be considered. Balanced treatment of opposing issues in nonfiction must be presented either in a single book or across multiple books in a library. Fiction must be considered "authentic literature", and if the book is above or representative of a particular group, the authors belonging to that group may be considered.
Obscene Content / Harmful Material – see EFB (LEGAL); (LOCAL) Protection from Inappropriate Material - see EFB (LEGAL);(LOCAL)	<p>Obscene content is not protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Regardless of other criteria, titles with obscene content (as defined by Penal Code 43.21 (1)) or harmful material (as defined by Penal Code 43.24(a)) will be deselected and may not be included in library collections.</p> <p>In accordance with law and guidance from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, library materials shall not include "harmful material"; any library material that is pervasively vulgar or educationally unsuitable; any library material containing indecent or profane content; any library material that refers a person to a website, including by use of a link or QR code, containing content legally prohibited under law; or any other material legally prohibited from inclusion in a public school library.</p> <p>"Indecent content" means content that portrays sexual or excretory organs or activities in a way that is patently offensive. Education Code 33.020(2)</p> <p>"Profane content" means content that includes grossly offensive language that is considered a public nuisance. Education Code 33.020(4)</p>

When Professional Reviews are Unavailable:

Some, but not all, types of materials may be selected when professional reviews are unavailable. If eligible for selection, these items must still meet the selection criteria. Librarians may use the table below to determine whether to recommend an item.

Type of Material	Appropriateness, Literary Value, & Presentation of Information
Nonfiction (neither formulaic nor literary) *This does not include Graphic Novels.	<p>If no professional reviews can be located, the publisher-designated age range may be used. The following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A publisher's age range or interest level must be designated.• If the publisher-designated age range spans multiple levels, the librarian must use both the publisher-designated age range, interest level, and research on the book to determine the primary target audience.• Adult (AD) designated content may only be purchased by high schools if no “obscene” or “harmful” content is included.• Young Adult (YA) may only be purchased at secondary campuses. <p>The librarian must carefully weigh the following criteria when making a decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether the objective of having the material in the collection could be fulfilled by another work with a positive review• Publisher’s reputation• Author’s reputation• Curricular needs• Endorsement by a professional association• The need for a balanced and diverse collection• Providing balanced viewpoints either within the book or within the library collection.

<p>Graphic Novels/ MANGA Rating Scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E- Everybody may be in all schools • Y (youth, ages 10+) and T (teens, ages 13+) for middle school and/or high school libraries • T+ or OT (older teens, ages 16+) for high school libraries only. • M (mature, 18+) and AD (adult) may not be purchased 	<p>Librarians must research to determine the intended audience for the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary librarians may select Manga but must first research individual book content and determine if it meets all board policy-aligned selection criteria. • Items marked “mature” or “explicit” may not be purchased • Books marked for “older teens,” 16+, “seinen,” or “josei” may only be considered at schools serving 9-12 grade students after being read and approved by two different librarians at two different schools.
Literary Fiction and Literary Nonfiction	Require two professional reviews to purchase. This includes memoirs, biographies, and poetry.
Formulaic Fiction Series	If a positive professional review exists for a book in a formulaic fiction series, it will suffice for the entire series UNLESS the character ages as the series progresses. Once the character ages out of the school’s student age range, the rest of the series should not be purchased at that school.
Formulaic Nonfiction Series	If a positive professional review exists for one of the books in a formulaic nonfiction series, it will suffice for the entire series—for example, Animal Allies by Capstone Publishing. One review serves for all five titles in the series.
Items in Other Languages	If a professional review cannot be found for a specific translation, the book may still be selected if the English-language version meets all selection criteria.
Items Originally Published before the 1970’s.	Professional reviews for classic books considered part of the “literary canon” or religious or historical texts may not be available. In these instances, the book may still be selected if research indicates it meets all Fort Worth ISD selection criteria. Librarians should consider whether items are in the public domain and the degree of student appeal when making decisions.

Where Can I Find Reviews?

Gale Academic OneFile publication Search Gale Educator's Reference Center	Vendor Sites such as Mackin, Titlewave, Perma-Bound, or Bound-to-Stay-Bound. Get a copy of the actual review (Library Services lookup).
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What if I Can't Find Two Positive Reviews Online?

Check if other district libraries have the same title at your level. If they have it, you can purchase it.	Consider obtaining a copy from another school or the public library to read before purchasing.
Is the book on a state-recommended reading list? Lists from the ALA (American Library Association) or TLA include age suggestions to help librarians determine the intended audience.	Nonfiction does not always have reviews on every title in a series. Check to see if the series has been reviewed positively. If so, then you may purchase this title.

Maintaining the Collection:

In accordance with state guidelines and District administrative procedures, collections should be evaluated and updated regularly based on the collections' age, relevance, diversity, and variety. This is done at the campus level by the campus librarian, who is responsible for repairing, replacing, and removing items as necessary. (See weeding procedures below) This includes the removal of items found to contain "harmful" or "obscene" content as per EFB(Legal). Maintenance also includes completing an annual year-end inventory of the collection.

Weeding the Library Collection:

Resource selection is an ongoing process that includes removing resources that are no longer appropriate and periodically replacing or repairing those that still have educational value. Campus librarians should evaluate collections at least annually to ensure they contain only resources that are accurate, current, and relevant to the school's curricular and recreational programs. Items which no longer meet these criteria, as well as books that contain "harmful" or "obscene" material (EFB(Legal)) shall be removed from the collection by District library staff. Library staff will utilize the CREW Method for Weeding- <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/pubs/crew/index.html>

In accordance with EFB(Legal), A district possesses significant discretion to determine the content of its school libraries. A district must, however, exercise its discretion in a manner consistent with the First Amendment.

Students' First Amendment rights are implicated by the removal of books from the shelves of a school library. A district shall not remove materials from a library for the purpose of denying students access to ideas with which the district disagrees. A district may remove materials because they are pervasively vulgar or based solely upon the educational suitability of the books in question

5. Recommendation & Procurement of Materials

Library materials are recommended and procured in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and District standards and priorities in policy. Librarians and other professional staff assist the SLAC in developing lists of materials to recommend to the Board for approval. The Board considers the SLAC's recommended list and may propose changes before taking action to approve or reject items. At least 30 days prior to the Board's vote, the Superintendent must make the list accessible to the public.

When assisting the SLAC in developing a list of materials, the librarians and other professional staff shall ensure that the materials:

1. Enrich and support the TEKS and the state and local curriculum, taking into consideration students' varied interests, maturity levels, abilities, and learning styles.
2. Foster growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and societal standards.
3. Encourage the enjoyment of reading, foster high-level thinking skills, support personal learning, and encourage discussion based on rational analysis.
4. Represent ethnic, religious, and cultural groups of the state and their contributions to the state, the nation, and the world.

Additionally, the librarians and other professional staff shall consider the following factors when developing the list of materials:

1. Recommendations from students, parents/guardians, teachers, and District residents.
2. Consultation with District teachers and library staff.
3. Consultation with library staff from other districts.
4. Extensive review of the library material.
5. Context of the library material, including overall fit within the existing collection and support of the District curriculum.
6. Reviews from professional journals in library science, recognized professional education or content journals with book reviews, national and state award recognition lists, library science field experts, and highly acclaimed author and literacy expert recommendations.
7. Coverage of topics, authors, series, or genres that fill gaps in the school library collection.

Note: Board approval of a library title constitutes approval for all ISBN formats of that title—including paperback, hardcover, ebook, audiobook, and language translations—provided the content is substantially the same and consistent with District selection standards.

6. Access & Parental Involvement

The District allows efficient parental access to District libraries and available online catalogs. Online catalogs are publicly available. Each campus communicates: (a) access to policies related to school libraries and library materials; (b) consistent access to library materials and resources; and (c) opportunities for students, parents/guardians, educators, and community members to provide feedback on library materials and services.

Parents/guardians are primary decision-makers regarding their child's access to library materials. Students may self-select materials for literacy development and the library program. District staff may assist in selection; the ultimate determination of appropriateness remains with the student and parent/guardian.

In accordance with law and administrative procedures, parents/guardians may submit to the principal (or designee) a list of library materials that their child shall not be allowed to check out or access for use outside of the school library. The Superintendent establishes permitted submission methods. Parents/guardians may select alternative library materials for their child.

Parents/guardians wishing to access a school's library first submit a request to the principal to arrange a time that does not interfere with instruction or disrupt student use. Requests to access a campus or District catalog are submitted in writing to the principal and responded to per administrative procedures.

7. Protection from Inappropriate Material & CIPA

Library materials shall not include "harmful material"; any material that is pervasively vulgar or educationally unsuitable; any library material containing indecent or profane content; any material that refers a person to a website (including by link or QR code) containing content legally prohibited under law; or any other material legally prohibited from inclusion in a public school library. Library materials must comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), including technology protection measures.

8. Challenge of Library Materials

A District employee, a parent/guardian of a District student, or a District resident may challenge library material. The SLAC recommends to the Board the procedures for challenging library materials.

Guiding Principles for Challenges

Guiding principles for review of a challenge include:

1. Challenges may occur even when proper procedures and objectives were followed in selection.

2. Access to challenged material is restricted during the challenge process.
3. The final decision considers the material's appropriateness for its intended use.
4. No material shall be removed solely because of the ideas expressed or the personal background of the author or characters.

Formal Challenge

The formal challenge process shall be in accordance with Board Policy EFB(LOCAL).

The District shall make the Texas Education Agency form for challenging library materials available on the District's website.

If a District employee, a parent or guardian of a District student, or a District resident wishes to challenge library material, they shall follow the procedures to complete and submit the challenge form.

In addition to copies of the completed form being provided to the members of the SLAC in accordance with law, copies shall also be provided to the Board, the Superintendent, the school librarian, and any other staff designated in administrative procedures.

SLAC Recommendation

The SLAC shall consider the challenge in accordance with Board-adopted procedures and the law, and shall make a recommendation to the Board.

Any meeting of the SLAC or any review committee must comply with the meeting requirements under Education Code 33.025(g) and (h), including required notices, meeting minutes, and the submission of meeting minutes and audio or video recordings to the District.

The Superintendent, the school librarian, the individual submitting the challenge, and any other appropriate staff shall receive a copy of the SLAC's recommendation.

An individual who submitted a challenge may appeal the SLAC decision to the Board consistent with Education Code 33.027(f) and statutory timelines. If the Board determines not to remove the material, the title may not be challenged again before the second anniversary of the Board's final decision. If a challenge results in removal, teachers at the affected grade level are notified to remove any classroom copies.