Bentonville Schools

School Library Materials Selection Procedure *(updated 12/2021)*

I. Introduction

Philosophy of the Library Media Center

The school library program, as an integral part of the total curriculum, is the vehicle that provides opportunities for students to learn how to identify, locate, organize, and present needed information in a clear, concise, and persuasive manner, and to foster a lifelong interest in both reading and knowledge. Each student, therefore, should have access to an effective, integrated school library program that reflects a broad range of materials and information representing varied points of view on current and historical issues.

II. Selection Objectives

School library materials will be selected by the District to support and enrich the educational program. Materials will serve both the breadth of the curriculum and the needs and interests of the faculty and students. It is the obligation of the District to provide for a wide range of abilities and to respect the diversity of many differing viewpoints.

Library materials are defined as all print, non-print and electronic materials and resources, generally found in school libraries, that are used by students and teachers in the District's educational program. Library materials do not include textbooks or any other resources identified for use in the delivery of the curriculum for various courses.

III. Responsibility for Selection

The District's Board, by state law, is ultimately responsible for all books and materials used in the District. Responsibilities for actual selection of school library materials shall rest with the certified school library media specialist and other professionally trained personnel, who shall discharge this obligation consistent with the Board's adopted selection criteria and procedures. The library media specialist will work cooperatively with staff members to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selections.

IV. Criteria for Selection

The following general selection criteria will apply to all library materials, including electronic, print and non-print resources.

- Support and enhance the curricular and educational goals of the District;
- Are appropriate for the ages, learning styles, interests, and maturity of the schools' students, or parents in the case of parenting literature;
- Contribute to the examination of issues from varying points of view and help to broaden students understanding of their rights and responsibilities in our society;
- Help develop critical thinking skills;
- Are factually and/or historically accurate, in the case of non-fiction works and/or serve a pedagogical purpose;

- Have literary merit as perceived by the educational community; and
- Are technically well-produced, physically sound (to the extent appropriate), free of pervasively vulgar content, and represent a reasonably sound economic value.

Certified school library media specialist and other professionally trained personnel may refer to the following for guidance:

- YALSA
- ALSC Notable Children's Books
- AASA Science Books and Films Online
- Booklist
- Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
- Horn Book
- Kirkus Reviews
- Library Journal
- School Library Journal
- State and National Book Award Lists (including but not limited to Caldecott, Newbery, National Book Award, Charlie May Simon, Arkansas Diamond, Coretta Scott King)

V. Retention and Continuous Evaluation

Media center materials shall be reviewed regularly to ensure the continued appropriateness of the center's collection to the school's curriculum and to maintain the collection in good repair. The process of evaluating materials for inclusion in collections is continuous and systematic. This process should include the removal of materials no longer appropriate to the school's needs. Those materials no longer meeting the selection criteria, have not been used for a long period of time, or are too worn to be economically repaired shall be withdrawn from the collection and disposed of. A record of withdrawn media materials including the manner of their disposal shall be maintained for a period of three years.

VI. Gifts

Gifts to the media centers shall be evaluated to determine their appropriateness before they are placed in any media center. The evaluation shall use the same criteria as for all other materials considered for inclusion in the media centers. Any items determined to be unacceptable shall be returned to the donor or disposed of at the discretion of the media specialist. The media centers shall have a list of desired items to give to prospective donors to aid them in their selection of materials to donate.

VII. Challenges

A parent, legal guardian or person having lawful control of a current District student, a person standing in loco parentis of a current District student may formally challenge the appropriateness of a media center selection by following the procedure. The challenged material shall remain available throughout the challenge process.

In the case of a complaint, the following initial procedures shall be followed:

1. Before any formal challenge can be filed, the complainant shall request a conference through the principal's office with a licensed media center employee.

a. The complainant shall be given a copy of Policy 5.7.1 and this procedure and the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form prior to the conference.
b. The meeting shall take place at the earliest possible time of mutual convenience, but in no case later than five (5) working days from the date of the request unless it is by the choice of the complainant.
c. Prior to the meeting the principal and library media specialist will review the specific item to confirm that it meets the selection criteria. If the principal and library media specialist agree that the specific item fails to meet the selection criteria, the material will be removed from circulation at that time.

2. In the meeting, the media specialist shall explain either that the specific item has been removed, or that the selection criteria and how the challenged material meets the selection criteria. The complainant shall explain his/her reasons for objecting to the selected material.
    a. If, at the completion of the meeting, the complainant wishes to make a formal challenge to the selected material, he/she may do so by completing the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form and submitting it to the principal's office.
    b. Before completing the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form, the Complainant must review the challenged material in its entirety.

In the case the complainant completes the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The principal shall select a committee of five (5) or seven (7) licensed personnel to review the contested media.
    a. The committee shall include the principal as chair and at least one media specialist.
    b. The remaining committee members shall be personnel with curriculum knowledge appropriate for the material being contested and representative of diverse viewpoints. *Whenever possible, the committee members shall represent other grade level personnel whose buildings could also be impacted by the decision.*
    c. Each committee member must review the challenged material in its entirety.
    d. The task of the committee shall be to determine if the challenged material meets the criteria of selection. No material shall be withdrawn solely for the viewpoints expressed within it and shall be reviewed in its entirety and not selected portions taken out of context.
2. The principal shall convene a meeting after a reasonable time for the committee members to adequately review the contested material and the Request for Formal Reconsideration Form submitted by the complainant.
3. The complainant shall be allowed to present the complaint to the committee after which time the committee shall meet privately to discuss the material.
4. The committee shall vote by secret ballot to determine whether the contested material shall be removed from the media center's collection.
    a. The primary consideration for determining the appropriateness of the material in question is whether the material is (i) misleading; (ii) factually inaccurate; or (iii) otherwise inappropriate for the intended audience and use.
5. A summary of the reasons for the decision will be prepared and published on the committee's behalf. A notice of the committee's decision and the summary shall be given (by hand or certified mail) to the complainant.

If the decision is to not remove the material and the complainant chooses to appeal the decision:

1. The complainant may appeal the decision to the Board by filing a written appeal to the Superintendent within 5 working days of the committee's decision or of written receipt of the decision.
2. The Superintendent shall present the original complaint and the committee's decision along with the summary of its reasons for its position plus a recommendation of the administration, if so desired, to the Board within 15 days of the committee's decision.
3. The Board shall review the material submitted to them by the Superintendent and make a decision within thirty (30) days of receipt of the information.
    a. The Board may decide (i) to retain the challenged instructional material in whole or in part, (ii) to limit the availability of the challenged instructional material, or (iii) to remove the challenged instructional material from the public school. The Board's decision is final.
    b. After a decision is made, the same selection would not be reconsidered by the committee again within a 24 month period.

REVIEW COMMITTEE CHECKLIST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

Title: _____
Author: _____
Did you read the material in its entirety? _____

Does the material meet the following selection criteria?

- Support and enhance the curricular and educational goals of the district;
- Are appropriate for the ages, learning styles, interests, and maturity of the schools' students, or parents in the case of parenting literature;
- Contribute to the examination of issues from varying points of view and help to broaden students understanding of their rights and responsibilities in our society;
- Help develop critical thinking skills;
- Are factually and/or historically accurate, in the case of non-fiction works and/or serve a pedagogical purpose;
- Have literary merit as perceived by the educational community; and
- Are technically well-produced, physically sound (to the extent appropriate), free of pervasively vulgar content, and represent a reasonably sound economic value.

If you determine the material does not meet one or more of the listed criteria, please provide details.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids? Yes ____ No___
If the answer is yes, please list titles of selection aids:

_____

_____

Additional Comments:

_____

_____

Overall Recommendation by Committee Member:

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature Date

Bentonville Schools

RECONSIDERATION REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT FORM
(Attach extra pages if needed to complete statement)

Title: _____
Author: _____

Committee's decision:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Justification for committee's decision:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signatures of Committee Members:

Copies sent to:

- Central Administrative Office
- Complainant