

Otsego Public Schools

Guidelines for the Selection of District Media Resources

Current demands placed upon schools call for an abundance of learning media. To help meet these demands, the school media centers and classroom libraries contain a wide variety of instructional media which support the curriculum. They also provide additional media to attract students to reading, viewing, and listening as sources of pleasure and recreation over and above needed subject content. To ensure acquisition of these media in sufficient quantity, variety, and quality guidelines herein are designed to identify procedures for the selection of media.

Purposes of the Selection Guidelines

- To implement the instructional objectives of Otsego Public Schools
- To assist building administrators, media clerks and professional educators in the selection of instructional media
- To inform the public about criteria upon which selections are made
- To maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of media for information, reference, and research
- To foster learning as a lifelong activity through exposure to print and non-print media
- To provide recreational media resources

Definition of Media

In the context of a school or classroom library, the term media encompasses:

- Print Media: Traditional physical media such as hardcover and paperback books, graphic novels, periodicals (magazines and newspapers), and reference sets (encyclopedias and almanacs).
- Non-Print/Digital Media: Electronic resources including e-books, audiobooks, streaming video services, educational databases, and software applications.
- Multimedia/Audiovisual: media that combine different forms of communication, such as DVDs, CDs, kits that include both a book and an audio recording, and interactive digital simulations.
- Instructional Equipment: In many school "Media Centers," the term also extends to the hardware required to use these media, such as tablets, e-readers, computers, and projection systems.

Goals of Material Selection

- To maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of media for information, reference, and research
- To foster learning as a lifelong activity through exposure to print and non-print media
- To provide recreational media resources

Responsibility for Selection

Selection is accomplished as follows:

- Lists of *proposed* media are prepared by the school media clerks and/or teachers in collaboration with other district personnel at either the elementary or secondary level.
- These recommendations *may* be subject to review and approval by the appropriate building level administrator.
- Classroom libraries will be reviewed and vetted by the classroom teacher and/or department/grade level. (Board Policy: Section 26)

Specific Criteria for Media Selection

Selection of media centers, classroom libraries, and supplemental media shall be based upon:

- Relevance or permanent value
 - Accuracy
 - Authoritativeness
 - Readability
 - Student interest
 - Clear presentation and format
 - Educational significance
 - Need and value to the collection
 - Age appropriateness
 - Elementary (grades PK-5, ages 0-11)
 - Middle School (grades 6-8, ages 11-13)
 - High School (grades 9-12, ages 13-18)
 - Publisher recommendation of grade and/or age range
 - Elementary (grades PK-5, ages 0-11)
 - Middle School (grades 6-8, ages 11-13)
 - High School (grades 9-12, ages 13-18)
 - Agreement of grade/age appropriateness from at least two reputable and relevant sites. Here are some potential sites for reference
 - Booklist (subscription)
 - Barnes & Noble
 - Publisher's Weekly
 - Kirkus Review
 - Common Sense Media (subscription)
 - MASL
 - Amazon
 - Tidalwave Follett
 - AI
 - School Library Journal
1. If additional reviews from the above sites show disagreement about the age appropriateness of the material, a discussion among the building administrators will be held to make the final decision.
 2. Professional examination of the resource by the building administrator and/or a team of educators may be appropriate for recently published media that do not have sufficient reviews.
 3. Some books are not specifically rated for students in grades K-12 but may be appropriate for certain students. These may include classics, science fiction, thriller, or historical novels. Special attention will be paid to these books before selecting them, including multiple reviews and/or physical examination of the book by the building administrator and/or a team of educators.
 4. History of circulation, if appropriate.

Otsego Public Schools believes that media containing graphic and/or gratuitous violence, sexual content, expletives, or hate speech, and without literary or educational merit, should not be included in our school media centers or classroom libraries. MCL Act 33, Section 722.674. Should a parent, staff member, or student believe that a media material does not meet this standard, the **Media Challenge Procedures** can be applied.

Otsego Public Schools Media Challenge Procedures

Otsego Public Schools believes that media containing graphic and/or gratuitous violence, sexual content, expletives, or hate speech, and without literary or educational merit, should not be included in our school media centers or classroom libraries. MCL Act 33, Section 722.674

Otsego Public Schools believes each parent/guardian has the right to determine the appropriateness of library or classroom library resources for their children. If a parent/guardian would like to opt their student out of a particular district media resource, please contact the student's teacher.

Should a parent, staff member, or student believe that a specific piece of media does not meet the standard stated above, the following Challenge Procedures will be applied:

Challenge Procedure

Initial Review Process

- Parents, staff, or students with a complaint about the media should state their concerns to their school media clerk, teacher, or building administrator in writing with a clear explanation as to why they find the content objectionable.
- The staff member will facilitate a physical review and/or reading of the selection while gathering information regarding the media's recommended grade and/or age range, as well as at least two reviews from the sites listed in the media selection process.
- The staff member should hold a meeting with the complainant to discuss their concerns about the media and how it aligns with the curriculum. In the event the staff member does not feel comfortable holding such a meeting on their own, they should schedule a meeting with the complainant and their department chair person and/or administrator present.
- The staff member will provide that information internally to a team composed of the building administrator(s) and Directors of Curriculum, to make a determination on the appropriateness of the media. This will include a physical review and/or reading of the media. The team will determine if the media will remain in the Otsego Public Schools libraries and classrooms. Determination of appropriateness will be determined by a two-thirds majority vote.
- If the determination is to remove the media, that media will be removed from all Otsego Public Schools libraries or classroom libraries and will be placed on the Book Review List. If the determination is to keep the media, the media will be returned to circulation at the site where the initial complaint was filed.
- A meeting will be scheduled with the media clerk, administrator, Directors of Curriculum, and the person who filed the complaint to discuss the media selection policy and the outcome of the Challenge Procedure, along with options for next steps.
- If the complaint is not sufficiently resolved through the Challenge Procedure, the media clerk, administrator, or Directors of Curriculum will explain the formal review process, Media Reconsideration, and provide the individual a copy of Media Reconsideration procedures and form.

- If there is concern about multiple pieces of media, a separate form must be completed for each.

Media Reconsideration

Reconsideration Process

The following procedures will be followed if, after challenging the questioned media there is still a request to remove or retain the media from Otsego Public School libraries, curriculum or classroom libraries. The request for reconsideration must be submitted within 30 days of the decision.

- The complainant is required to complete and submit the [Media Reconsideration Form](#).
- If the media was found to be appropriate in the initial challenge, the media in question will remain on library shelves and in circulation until a formal decision is made. If the media was removed from circulation, that judgement will remain unless/until the decision is overturned.
- The **Reconsideration Committee** will be convened by the district and may consist of
 - Three parents and/or community members invited to participate by the building administrator
 - Three teachers and/or media clerks invited to participate by the building administrator
 - Building Administrator
 - Director of Curriculum for the particular level of the media
 - A Social Worker or School Psychologist
 - A Secondary Student
- The district will secure copies of the media for the committee to review.
- The Reconsideration Committee should schedule and hold an initial formal reconsideration meeting in a timely manner (20 school days) after the request for reconsideration is received.
- The Reconsideration Committee should follow the procedures listed below:
 - The Committee will review reconsideration committee guidelines and procedures along with evidence supporting why the media was determined to be inappropriate or appropriate through the Challenge Process.
 - A member of the committee should keep minutes.
 - All committee members should fully review the media (read or view the entire work) before discussion or voting.
 - The committee reserves the right to use outside expertise if necessary to help in its decision-making process.
 - The complainant may not participate in or observe the committee's deliberations.
 - During the final reconsideration meeting (which may be one meeting), the committee will make its decision determined by a majority to retain, move the media to a different level, or remove the media. This will be by an anonymous vote.
 - A written decision will be shared with the complainant, the originating school administrator, media clerk, and the Superintendent within ten school days following the vote. If the decision is to remove the media, that decision will be shared with all administrators and media clerks in the district, so that all copies of the media will be removed from the district.
 - Media that is removed from circulation will be placed on the Book Review List for media clerks, teachers, and administrators.

- Decisions on reconsidered media will stand for five years before a request for reconsideration will be accepted. The date(s) of challenge and review will be documented on the Book Review List.
- Decisions made by the Reconsideration Committee will be final with no appeal process.

Otsego Public Schools Curriculum Challenge Procedures

Otsego Public Schools believes that media containing graphic and/or gratuitous violence, sexual content, expletives, or hate speech, and without literary or educational merit, should not be included in our school media centers or classroom libraries. MCL Act 33, Section 722.674. All curriculum materials and media should adhere to those same standards.

Otsego Public Schools believes each parent/guardian has the right to determine the appropriateness of library or classroom library resources for their children. If a parent/guardian would like to opt their student out of a particular segment of the approved curriculum, they should contact the student's teacher.

Curriculum is defined as the approved instructional materials, strategies, activities, and routines used to engage students in the learning process. Otsego Public Schools' curriculum is reviewed and approved through the Otsego School Improvement Committee (OSIC). The approved curriculum is aligned to the state standards and documented through a pacing and curriculum guide to establish a set cadence of instruction.

Should a parent, staff member, or student believe that a specific piece of curriculum does not meet the standard stated above, the following Challenge Procedures will be applied:

Challenge Procedure

Initial Review Process

- Parents, staff, or students with a complaint about the curriculum should state their concerns to their teacher or building administrator in writing with a clear explanation as to why they find the content objectionable.
- The staff member will facilitate a physical review and/or reading of the selection while gathering information regarding the curriculum's recommended grade and/or age range as well as at least two reviews from a curricular source.
- The staff member should hold a meeting with the complainant to discuss their concerns about the curriculum and how it aligns with the state standards. In the event the staff member does not feel comfortable holding such a meeting on their own, they should schedule a meeting with the complainant and their department chair person and/or administrator present.
- The staff member will provide that information internally to a team composed of the building administrator(s) and Directors of Curriculum, to make a determination on the appropriateness of the curriculum. This will include a physical review and/or reading of the curriculum. The team will determine if the curriculum will remain in the Otsego Public Schools pacing and curriculum guide. Determination of appropriateness will be determined by a two-thirds majority vote.
- If the determination is to remove the curriculum, that curriculum will be removed from all Otsego Public Schools classrooms and will be placed on the Book Review List. If the determination is to keep the curriculum, the curriculum will be returned to the classroom at the site where the initial complaint was filed.

- A meeting will be scheduled with the staff member, administrator, Directors of Curriculum, and the person who filed the complaint to discuss the curriculum selection policy and the outcome of the Challenge Procedure, along with options for next steps.
- If the complaint is not sufficiently resolved through the Challenge Procedure, the staff member, administrator, or Directors of Curriculum will explain the formal review process, Media Reconsideration, and provide the individual with a copy of the Media Reconsideration procedures and form.
- If there is concern about multiple pieces of curriculum, a separate form must be completed for each.

Media Reconsideration

Reconsideration Process

The following procedures should be followed if, after challenging the questioned curriculum, there is still a request to remove or retain the curriculum in the Otsego Public School pacing and curriculum guide. The request for reconsideration should be submitted within 30 days of the decision.

- The complainant is required to complete and submit the [Media Reconsideration Form](#).
- If the curriculum was found to be appropriate in the initial challenge, the curriculum in question will remain a part of the pacing and curriculum guide until a formal decision is made. If the curriculum was removed from the pacing and curriculum guide, that judgment will remain unless/until the decision is overturned.
- The **Reconsideration Committee** will be convened by the district and may consist of
 - Three parents and/or community members invited to participate by the building administrator
 - Three teachers who serve on OSIC will be invited to participate by the building administrator
 - Building Administrator
 - Director of Curriculum for the particular level of the curriculum
 - A Social Worker or School Psychologist
 - A Secondary Student
- The district will secure copies of the curriculum for the committee to review.
- The Reconsideration Committee should schedule and hold an initial formal reconsideration meeting in a timely manner (20 school days) after the request for reconsideration is received.
- The Reconsideration Committee should follow the procedures listed below:
 - The Committee will review reconsideration committee guidelines and procedures, along with evidence supporting why the curriculum was determined to be inappropriate or appropriate through the Challenge Process.
 - A member of the committee should keep minutes.
 - All committee members should fully review the curriculum (read or view the entire work) before discussion or voting.
 - The committee reserves the right to use outside expertise if necessary to help in its decision-making process.
 - The complainant may not participate in or observe the committee's deliberations.

- During the final reconsideration meeting (which may be one meeting), the committee will make its decision determined by a majority to retain, move the curriculum to a different level, or remove the curriculum. This *may* be an anonymous vote.
- A written decision will be shared with the complainant, the originating school administrator or teacher, and the Superintendent within ten school days following the vote. If the decision is to remove the curriculum, that decision will be shared with all administrators and members of the affected department in the district, so that all copies of the curriculum will be removed from the district.
- Curriculum that is removed from the pacing and curriculum guide will be placed on the Book Review List for media clerks, teachers, and administrators.
- Decisions on reconsidered curriculum will stand for five years before a request for reconsideration will be accepted. The date(s) of challenge and review will be documented on the Book Review List.
- Decisions made by the Reconsideration Committee will be final with no appeal process.