

PEARLAND ISD LIBRARY BOOK SELECTION AND REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION PROCESS

Criteria for Library Book Selection

Selection Responsibility & Selection Process	The Pearland ISD Board of Trustees approved a District of Innovation Waiver (April, 2026) to shift from title-by-title approval to systems-level governance for library acquisitions. The Board will maintain oversight of library material policies, selection criteria and processes, but will no longer approve individual titles at Board meetings. - The certified school librarian oversees the selection of campus library materials using the criteria outlined below to guide the development of ordering lists. - All proposed materials will be posted on the Pearland ISD Library Services webpage for a 30-day public review period. Community members are encouraged to provide feedback on new items during this time. Pearland ISD District Administration will review all proposed items and community comments, collaborate with librarians to address any concerns, and finalize approval for ordering at the end of the 30-day public review period. - Each edition, cover design, and format of a book (e.g., hardcover, paperback, trade paperback, movie tie-in edition, eBook, audiobook, large print, foreign language translation, etc.) is assigned a unique ISBN. Once a title has been approved in one format, additional formats or editions of the same title do not require separate approval or posting. An adaption of a work, such as a graphic novel, condensed version, or adaptation for younger readers, is considered a separate work and needs to be posted for approval.
Reflects the Interests and Needs of the Students and Faculty	Information from a needs analysis such as circulation data, student and faculty suggestions, curricular topics, and current events are used to identify student and faculty needs. While not every book in the library will be relevant to every student, all students should find something of interest to them and see themselves and others reflected in the materials.
Supports Independent Reading and Classroom Content	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 when students choose books of interest, they read more often and perform better in reading than their counterparts. Selecting library books in diverse topics, themes, formats, and genres supports student choice.
Appropriate for the Reading Levels and Understanding of Students	A book needs to have at least one positive professional review that includes the target audience. Two positive professional reviews are preferred for books classified as Fiction. - Elementary- reviewed for grades PK-4; use caution when considering books reviewed for grades 4-8; books designated as YA or Adult may not be added. - Middle School- reviewed for grades 5-6 or below; Fiction books designated as YA or Adult may not be added; use caution when considering fiction books reviewed for grades 6-12 as these may not be a good fit for the 5th graders on campus. YA nonfiction may be considered with caution. - Junior High- reviewed for grades 7-8 or below; Fiction books designated as Adult may not be added (with the exception of classic novels that are generally deemed appropriate for grades 7-8); reviews stating explicit material may not be added; use caution when considering books reviewed for grades 8-12 as these may not be a good fit for the 7th graders on campus. - High School- Reviewed for grades 9-12 or below; reviews stating explicit material may not be added; fiction for adults may be considered with caution and should be included primarily when it serves a specific curricular purpose. - Books coded as Adult/AD Non-Fiction (literary, informational, reference, series, and other types of nonfiction) should be carefully considered prior to adding to secondary (7-12) collections.
Included for Literacy or Artistic Value and Merit	A book needs to have at least one professional review that favorably addresses the quality of the work. Use of language, character and plot development, illustrations and photographs, reader engagement and readability, and technical qualities all speak to literary or artistic value and merit. <i>*See Recommended Selection Resources section below.</i>
Senate Bill 13 (2025) Definitions	In compliance with SB 13, library materials must exclude content that is harmful, indecent, pervasively vulgar, or profane. This restriction also applies to any embedded QR codes or URLs that could direct users to prohibited content. Sec. 33.020. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter; (1) "Harmful material" has the meaning assigned by Section 43.24, Penal Code. (2) "Indecent content" means content that portrays sexual or excretory organs or activities in a way that is patently offensive. (3) "Library material" means any book, record, file, or other instrument or document in a school district's library catalog. The term does not include instructional material, as defined by Section 31.002, or materials procured for the TexShare consortium under Subchapter M, Chapter 441, Government Code. (4) "Profane content" means content that includes grossly offensive language that is considered a public nuisance.
Presents Information with Greatest Degree of Accuracy and Clarity	A book should have at least one professional review that favorably addresses the book's accuracy and clarity. Author's reputation, potential bias, credentials, and approach to subject matter may be considered. A balanced collection will include varied views of controversial issues. Fiction must be considered "authentic literature," and if the book is about or representative of a particular group, the author's belonging to that group should be considered as an authentic voice. <i>*See Recommended Selection Resources section below.</i>
Recommended Selection Resources	There is a vast amount of information now available from various resources and in a variety of formats. - Librarians must use their professional expertise and that of other professionals. Acceptable professional resources that may be utilized include Booklist, School Library Journal, Kirkus Reviews, Horn Book, Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, Library Journal, Junior Library Guild, along with state and national lists. - Reviews should be read in their entirety prior to making a decision.

Some but not all types of materials may be purchased when professional reviews are not available. See next section for specific criteria and guidelines.		
Guidelines for Materials Without Reviews		
Type of Literature	Relevant for the Reading Level and Understanding of Students	Literary or Artistic Value and Merit / Information Presented with Accuracy and Clarity
Nonfiction (informational, reference, and other works of non-fiction that are neither formulaic series nor literary works)	- Includes dictionaries, encyclopedias, test preparation, how-to/ instructional guides, self-help, etc. - If no professional reviews can be located, the publisher designated age range may be used. - If the publisher designated age range spans multiple levels, or if no-age range is provided, the librarian should research the book to determine the primary target audience. - Materials identified as part of the Professional Collection are maintained to support instructional practices. These items are shelved separately and are restricted from student circulation.	Librarians must research the book in order to determine whether the item meets standards of literary/artistic value and merit as well as accuracy and clarity. The librarian must carefully weigh the following when making acquisition decisions. - 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 and teacher requests. - Endorsement by professional association (award or book list). - The need for a balanced and diverse collection. - Providing balanced viewpoints either within the book or within the library collection.
Manga/Graphic Novels	Librarians must research and use the publisher-specific rating scale to determine the intended audience for the content. - Items marked "Teen" should only be purchased for junior high or high school campuses. - Items marked as "Older Teen" should only be purchased for high school campuses. Librarians should proceed with extreme caution before purchasing manga designated as "Older Teen" and must review each volume before adding it to the collection.	Librarians may consider acquiring age-relevant manga and graphic novels that are on national or state lists. The sites below may also be utilized to research series and individual book content to determine whether the literature meets all board-aligned selection criteria. Review and information resources: No Flying No Tights SLJ Manga Primer SLJ Good Comics for Kids Manga Librarian Blog
Literary Fiction and Literary Nonfiction	Most literary fiction and literary non-fiction books are reviewed in at least one professional source; librarians must conduct research about the item and review the book prior to adding it to the collection. Online excerpts or a borrowed book may be used for review. The publisher's designated age range should be considered, along with the publisher's reputation. The book must be aligned with the district selection policy. (Includes memoirs, biographies, poetry, and narrative non-fiction).	
Formulaic Fiction Series	If a positive professional review (preferably two) exists for a book in a formulaic fiction series, it will suffice for the rest of the series. If the series ages up as the story progresses, the librarian should use the publisher's designated age range for each subsequent volume and should review each volume before it is added to the collection.	
Formulaic Nonfiction Series	If a positive review professional review exists for one of the books in a formulaic nonfiction series, it will suffice for the rest of the series. Publisher designated age ranges should be considered for each volume.	
Items in other languages	If a professional review cannot be found for a specific translation, a book may still be acquired if the English language version meets all selection criteria.	
Classics	Professional reviews for classic books considered part of the "literary cannon" and religious and historical texts may not be available. In these instances, the book may still be purchased if it meets all Pearland ISD selection criteria and board policy. Librarians should consider whether items are in the public domain and the degree of student appeal in their decisions. Librarians should also consider whether the work has been adopted by the district or campus as required reading for curriculum.	

Guidelines for Parental Involvement, Reconsideration, Deselection, and Interlibrary Loan

Parental Rights and Responsibilities

Each parent or guardian has the right to determine the appropriateness of library resources for their own children and should respect other families' rights to do the same.

- Each campus library catalog is available to parents (and to the general public) on the campus website. At elementary campuses, the library webpage is available from the **Library** tab. At middle, junior high, and high school campuses, parents can find the library page under the **Our School** menu.
- The primary guardian will receive an email notice each time that a student checks out an item from the library AND returns an item to the library.
- Primary guardians can use the **Destiny Parent Portal** to limit their child's access and block specific library titles. Instructions are available on the Pearland ISD Library Services page.
- The primary guardian can also restrict the titles that their children may access in the Sora eBook and audiobook lending platform. Instructions are located on the Pearland ISD Library Services Page.
- Families designate one parent/guardian as the primary guardian in Skyward during student registration.

Removal of Library Materials

The District possesses significant discretion to determine the content of its school libraries; however, such discretion must be exercised in alignment with the First Amendment. The District shall not remove library materials with the intent of limiting students' exposure to ideas or perspectives simply because it disagrees with them, in recognition of students' First Amendment protections. For more information, see Board of Education v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (1982)

Challenged Materials

A parent of a district student, any district employee, or any district resident may formally challenge a library resource based on appropriateness.

Informal Complaints

The school receiving a complaint about the appropriateness of print or digital library material shall try to resolve the matter informally using the following procedure:

- All complaints to staff members shall be reported to the campus principal, whether received by phone, email, letter, or in personal conversation. The campus librarian should also be notified.
- The librarian or principal will listen to the concerns and explain the library's selection policy, highlight parental tools for restricting their children's access to specific titles, and outline district procedures for formal challenges.
- No library resources should be removed or restricted from student use as a result of an informal complaint.
- If the complaint is not resolved informally, the librarian or principal will direct the complainant to the formal challenge form on the Pearland ISD Library Services Page.

Formal Challenges

The formal challenge form is available online on the Library Services Page.

- Before making a formal complaint, the complainant must read the material in its entirety.
- The district will form a reconsideration committee to review the challenged material. The committee will include at minimum, a principal, librarian, teacher, and a parent from the campus and/or or grade level band affected.
- Once a formal challenge has been filed, the challenged material must be removed from the shelf until the reconsideration process is completed and a final decision is made.
- The reconsideration committee should make a determination to either remove or retain the challenged material within 90 days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the reconsideration committee, the complainant may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees.
- If an item has gone through the reconsideration process and remains in the collection, the district will not reconsider the item again within two years of the decision to retain the book.

Weeding

Weeding is an essential element of collection development that ensures the library's materials are useful, current, and accessible. Each library's print collection is limited by the space available to house it, and collections should change over time to reflect changes in the community and in the library's goals. Weeding is a continual evaluation of resources intended to remove items that are no longer useful from the collection.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

Staff and students may borrow materials from other district libraries with the approval of the lending librarian. All materials requested for student use must be recommended and approved for the student's current age and grade level.

Definitions

Adult (AD)-The adult, or AD, audience designation used by publishers is not a reflection of content but of the audience for whom the content is written. Books that were not specifically written for children or young adults fall into this category.

Authentic Literature-Authentic literature refers to texts written in the natural language of the authors with an audience beyond schools (ie, the general public. They are not written in with a controlled vocabulary and/or to achieve a particular readability. Sometimes called “trade books,” these works are written to emotionally engage the reader.

Formulaic Fiction Series-Found at the elementary /middle level. Each book in a formulaic fiction series contains the same characters, the same plot structure, and does not develop in depth and complexity or tackle more mature content as the series progresses. (Ex. Magic Tree House is a formulaic series, while Harry Potter is literary.) Typically, only a few books in a formulaic series are reviewed.

Formulaic Non-Fiction Series- Each book in a formulaic nonfiction series contains the same organization structure, elements, reading level, and subject approach. Typically, only a few books in a formulaic series are reviewed.

High-Low (HiLo)- HiLo books are typically written to be of high interest to secondary students while being written at an early elementary level. Elementary /Middle libraries should exercise caution when considering a HiLo novel.

Literary Nonfiction-Literary nonfiction authors use techniques typically reserved for fiction to present informational content in creative and engaging ways.

Manga/Graphic Novel-Graphic novel refers to any book in a comic-strip format. Manga refers to style of Japanese comics/graphic novels. This type of literature is not always reviewed in professional library review journals.

Professional Library Review Journals- These journals are recognized as reputable selection tools within the field of librarianship. Acceptable professional library review journals include Booklists, Bulletin for the Center for Children’s Books, Horn Book, Kirkus, Library Journal, and School Library Journal. Although out-of-print, VOYA may be used for older items.

Public Domain- Creative works that are not protested by intellectual property law. In case of library books, these are books with expired copyright dates. Books in the public domain are generally accessible online.

Sexually Explicit- Content is sexually explicit if it includes sexual conduct or the exposure of intimate parts, as defined by the Texas Penal code, Section 21.16.

Young Adult (YA)-Books written for grades 6-12 are designated as Young Adult (YA). Common themes in YA realistic fiction include friendship, getting into trouble, coming of age, romantic and sexual interest, and family life. The text of a YA review is used to determine whether the title is suitable for high school and/or intermediate school. YA is not approved for middle school or elementary school.