

SELECTION AND RECONSIDERATION POLICIES

Selection of Library/Media Center Materials

The ultimate authority for the retention of materials for the schools' media centers rests with the Board of Education which shall serve as the final arbiter in resolving a challenge to any media center materials. Licensed media center personnel shall make the initial selections in consultation with school and district licensed staff. Suggestions of the administration, faculty, students and parents will be considered in the selection process. Final decision on purchases rests with the professional personnel in accordance with the formally adopted policy.

The purpose of the schools' libraries/media centers is to supplement and enrich the curriculum and instruction offered by the District. Promoting the dialogue characteristic of a healthy democracy necessitates the maintenance of a broad range of materials and information representing varied points of view on current and historical issues. In the selection of the materials and resources to be available in each library/media center consideration will be given to their age appropriateness. Materials should be available to challenge the different interests, learning styles, and reading levels of the school's students and that will help them attain the District's educational goals.

Selection Criteria:

The criteria used in the selection of media center materials shall be that the materials:

1. Support and enhance the curricular and educational goals of the district;
2. Are appropriate for the ages, learning styles, interests, and maturity of the schools' students, or parents in the case of parenting literature;
3. 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;
4. Help develop critical thinking skills;
5. Are factually and/or historically accurate, in the case of non-fiction works and/or serve a pedagogical purpose;
6. Earn favorable reviews in standard reviewing sources and/or favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel;
7. Exhibit a high degree of potential user appeal and interest;
8. Have literary merit as perceived by the educational community; and
9. Are technically well produced, physically sound (to the extent appropriate), and represent a reasonably sound economic value.

Selection of Materials on Controversial Topics

The school board subscribes to the principles expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. It is the responsibility of the school district to provide a wide range of materials on different levels of difficulty and representing different points of view. School library professional staff will provide materials on opposing viewpoints on controversial issues to develop necessary critical thinking skills to be discriminative users of information and productive members of society.

Acquisitions Procedures

In selecting learning resources, professional personnel will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids to selection, and other appropriate sources. The actual resource will be examined whenever possible. Recommendations for purchases involve administrators, teachers, students, district personnel, and community members, as appropriate.

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. 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.

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 item 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.

Challenges

The parent or guardian of a student affected by the material to be challenged and attending Clarendon Public Schools, or a District employee, may formally challenge the appropriateness of a media center selection.

The school district shall decide if material challenged shall remain available throughout the challenge process.

Before any formal challenge can be filed, the individual contesting (hereafter complainant) the appropriateness of the specified item shall request a conference through the building principal's office with a licensed media center employee.

Before a conference, the school district shall provide a copy of the following to a person who requests a conference:

- The written policy adopted by the school district;
- A Request for Formal Reconsideration form.

In the meeting, the media specialist shall explain the selection criteria and how the challenged material fits the criteria. The complainant shall explain his/her reasons for objecting to the selected material.

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 building principal's office.

To review the contested media, the building principal shall select a committee of licensed personnel. The principal, or his/her designee, shall be a member of the committee and may serve as chair. At least one member of the committee shall be a media specialist. The committee members, who are not the principal or a media specialist, shall be licensed personnel with curriculum knowledge appropriate for the material being challenged and be representative of diverse viewpoints.

The task of the committee shall be to determine if the challenged material meets the criteria of selection.

Material being challenged:

- Shall not be withdrawn solely for the viewpoints expressed within it; and
- Shall be reviewed in its entirety and shall not have selected portions taken out of context.

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.

The complainant shall be allowed to present the complaint to the committee.

After hearing from the complainant, the committee shall meet to discuss the material being challenged.

The committee shall vote to determine whether the contested material shall be relocated within the media center's collection to an area that is not accessible to minors under the age of 18.

A member from the voting majority shall write a summary of the reasons for their decision.

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 relocate the material, the complainant may appeal the committee's decision to the district Board of Directors by filing a written appeal to the Superintendent within 5 working days of the committee's decision or of written receipt of the decision.

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.

Members of the district Board of directors shall review the information submitted to them by the Superintendent and make a decision within thirty (30) days of receipt of the information.

The decision of a Board of Directors is final; and

A meeting held regarding a challenge or an appeal submitted under a written policy adopted by the school district shall be a public meeting and the records submitted and considered at a meeting shall be public records under the Freedom of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-25-101 et seq.

Dated Adopted:

Last Revised:

Appendix I

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. 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 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 abridgement 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 belief or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939.

Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23 1996, by the ALA Council.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

Complainant Name: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Media Center material being contested:

Reasons for contesting the material. (Be specific about why you believe the material does not meet the selection criteria listed in *Selection of Library/Media Center Materials*):

What is your proposed resolution?

Signature of receiving principal _____

Signature of Superintendent (if appealed) _____

Dated adopted: _____