

SURING SCHOOL DISTRICT
Materials Selection/Reconsideration Policy

Selection Philosophy:

The main objective of our selection procedure is to provide students with a wide range of educational materials on all levels of difficulty and in a variety of formats, with diversity of appeal, allowing for the presentation of many points of view.

The main objective of the library media center collection is to make available to students and faculty a collection of materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and meet the needs of the faculty and the needs of the students. Because students have a wide range of individual needs, abilities and learning styles, emphasis must be placed on providing background material, in a variety of levels and types to supplement classroom instruction, encourage individual intellectual curiosity, creativity, and imagination, and provide a broad range of materials on controversial issues to help students develop critical thinking and analytical skills.

Responsibility for Selection:

The board of education shall delegate to the superintendent the authority and responsibility for selection of all print and non-print materials. Responsibility for actual selection shall rest with appropriate professionally trained personnel according to professionally accepted criteria and procedures and according to the district selection policy as described below. Responsibility for coordinating the selection and purchase of library media center materials shall rest with the certified library media personnel.

Selection Criteria:

Resource materials shall be selected on the basis of the following criteria, with an emphasis on selecting materials for their strengths rather than rejecting them for their weaknesses.

- educational significance and support of the goals of state and district curricula.
- contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interest of the students
- favorable reviews found in standard selection sources
- favorable recommendation based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
- reputation and significance of the author, producer, and publisher
- validity, currency, and appropriateness of material in terms of reading level and user understanding level
- contribution of material to breadth of opinions represented in the collection and giving awareness of the pluralistic nature of our society
- high degree of potential user appeal
- high artistic quality, quality of presentation, and/or literary style
- quality and variety of format and appropriateness for its intended audience
- value commensurate with cost and/or need
- timeliness or permanence
- integrity in accuracy, factual content, clarity and presentation
- appropriateness for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of the students for whom the material is intended
- ability to motivate the intended audience to examine their own duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as citizens, and to make informed decisions and judgments in their daily lives
- ability to encourage objective understanding and analysis of intergroup tension and conflict, along with a recognition of underlying social, economic, and other contributing issues.

Selection Procedure:

Professional personnel will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids to selection and other appropriate sources, including, but not limited to: School Library Journal, Booklist, Horn Book, Elementary/Junior High School/High School Library Catalog, Kirkus Reviews, Bulletin for the Center for Children's Books, and Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices.

Recommendations for purchase shall involve administrators, teachers, students, district personnel, and community persons, as appropriate.

Gift and donated materials shall be judged by the selection criteria and shall be accepted or rejected by the same criteria as purchased items.

Selection is an ongoing process, including the removal of materials no longer appropriate, out of date, or unduly worn.

Materials for the media center are selected by the professional staff with due regard to the curriculum, the selection criteria, and suggestions from faculty, parents and students.

Intellectual Freedom and Reconsideration of Materials:

No duly selected materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the school except upon the recommendation of a recommendation committee with the concurrence of the superintendent, or upon the superintendent's recommendation, the concurrence of the board of education, or upon formal action of the board of education when a recommendation of a reconsideration committee is appealed to it.

--All complaints to staff members shall be reported to the building principal, whether received by telephone, letter, or in personal conversation.

--The principal shall contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve it informally by explaining the philosophy and goals of the school district and/or the library media center.

--If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant shall be supplied with a packet of materials consisting of the district's instructional goals and objectives, materials, selection policy statement, and the procedure for handling objections, as well as a standard printed form (see below) which shall be completed and returned before consideration will be a given to the complaint.

--If the formal request for reconsideration has not been received by the principal within two weeks, it shall be considered closed. If the request is returned, the reasons for selection of the specific work shall be reestablished by the appropriate staff.

--In accordance with statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child (or children) of a parent making such a request, if he/she so desires.

--Upon receipt of a completed objection form, the principal will convene a committee of five to consider the complaint. This committee shall consist of the following people from the school involved: the principal, the library media specialist, a member of the curriculum committee, a teacher of the grade level of the questioned material, and a Parent Group representative.

--The committee shall meet to discuss the materials, following the guidelines set forth in the Instructions to Reconsideration Committee, and shall prepare a report on the material containing its recommendations on disposition of the matter.

--The principal shall notify the complainant of the decision and send a formal report and recommendation to the superintendent, explaining the material selection system, and including the guidelines used in the selection of the item in question. If the committee decides to keep the work that caused the complaint, the same explanation shall be given to the complainant. If the committee finds the complaint valid, the principal will report the same to the superintendent and the complainant and make the recommended changes.

--If the complainant is still not satisfied, he or she may ask the superintendent to present an appeal to the board of education, which shall make a final determination of the issue. In making its decision, the board may seek assistance from outside organizations such as the American Library Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Cooperative Children's Book Center, etc., in making its determination.

Instructions to Reconsideration Committee:

--Bear in mind the principles of freedom to learn and to read, and base your decision on these broad principles rather than on defense of individual materials. Freedom of inquiry is vital to education and democracy.

--Study thoroughly all materials referred to you and read available reviews. The general acceptance of materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and holdings in other area schools.

--Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. Values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based on the materials as a whole.

--Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the principal to the complainant and the superintendent at the conclusion of your consideration of the questioned materials.

Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials Form

The board of education of the Suring School District has accepted policies in place regarding selection and evaluation of instructional materials, and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form, to be returned to the principal within two weeks, is the first step in these procedures.

Date _____ Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Alternate Phone _____

Do you represent: Self? _____ Organization? _____ (Check one)

If organization, name of organization: _____

Resource on which you are commenting:

Circle type of item: -Book -Textbook -Magazine -Audio Recording

-Video Recording -Newspaper -Electronic Information Source -Other

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

What brought this resource to your attention? _____

Have you read/viewed/examined the entire resource? _____

What concerns you about the resource? (Use reverse or additional pages if necessary.)

Are there resources you suggest to provide additional information, alternatives, or other viewpoints on this topic? _____

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 abridgment 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 beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.