

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION

The board recognizes that the selection of instructional materials is a vital component of the school district's curriculum.

The board has sole discretion to approve instructional materials for the school district. The board delegates its authority to determine which instructional materials will be utilized by and purchased by the school district to licensed employees. The licensed employees shall work closely together to ensure vertical and horizontal articulation of textbooks in the education program.

The board may appoint an ad hoc committee for the selection of instructional materials. The committee may be composed of school district employees, parents, students, community members or representatives of community groups.

In reviewing current instructional material for continued use and in selecting additional instructional materials, the licensed employees shall consider the current and future needs of the school district as well as the changes and the trends in education and society. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to report to the board the action taken by the selection committee.

In making its recommendations to the superintendent, the licensed employees will select materials which:

- Support the educational philosophy, goals and objectives of the school district;
- Consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
- Are within the school district's budget;
- Foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and difference of opinion;
- Stimulate growth in factual knowledge and literary appreciation;
- Encourage students to become decision-makers, to exercise freedom of thought and to make independent judgment through the examination and evaluation of relevant information, evidence and differing viewpoints;
- Portray the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to persons of both sexes; and,
- Increase an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each member of a multicultural
- Society.

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In the case of textbooks, the board shall make the final decision after a recommendation from the superintendent. The criteria stated above for selection of other instructional materials shall apply to the selection of textbooks. The superintendent may appoint licensed employees to assist in the selection of textbooks.

Gifts of instructional materials must meet these criteria stated above for the selection of instructional materials. The gift must be received in compliance with Board Policy 7044, "Gifts - Grants - Bequests."

Legal Reference: Iowa Code on 279.8; 2803, .14; 301 (1993).

Cross-Reference: 505 Student Scholastic Achievement

602 Curriculum 605 Instructional Materials 209.1 Ad Hoc Committees

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I. Responsibility for Selection of Instructional Materials

- A. The board is responsible for matters relating to the operation of the school district.
- B. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained and licensed employees of the school system. For the purpose of this rule the term "instructional materials" includes printed and multimedia materials (not equipment), whether considered text materials or library materials. The board retains the final authority for the approval of textbooks:
- C. While selection of materials may involve many people including principals, teachers, teacher-librarian, students, parents, and community members and, the responsibility for coordinating the selection of most instructional materials and making the recommendation for purchase rests with licensed employees
- D. Responsibility for coordinating the selection of text materials for distribution to classes will rest with the licensed employees, principal and superintendent. For the purpose of this rule the term 'text materials' includes textbooks and other print and non-printed material provided in multiple copies for use of a total class or major segment of a class.
- E. If the board appoints an ad hoc committee to make recommendations on the selection of instructional materials, the ad hoc committee shall be formed and appointed in compliance with the board policy on Ad Hoc Committees.
 1. The superintendent will inform the committee as to their role and responsibility in the process.
 2. The following statement shall be given to the ad hoc committee members:

Bear in mind the principles of the 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 in a democracy.

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

Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighted against each other and the opinions based on the material as a whole.

Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the principal to the complainant at the conclusion of our discussion of the questioned material.

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II. Material selected for use in the libraries and classrooms shall meet the following guidelines:

A. Religion - Material shall represent the major religions in a factual, unbiased manner. The primary source material of the major religions shall be considered appropriate, but material, which advocates rather than informs, or is designed to sway reader judgment regarding religion, shall not be included in the school libraries or classrooms.

B. Racism - Material shall present a diversity of race, custom, culture, and belief as a positive aspect of the nation's heritage and give candid treatment to unresolved intercultural problems, including those which involve prejudice, discrimination, and the undesirable consequences of withholding rights, freedom, or respect for an individual.

C. Sexism - Material shall reflect sensitivity to the needs, rights, traits and aspirations of men and women without preference or bias.

D. Age - Material shall recognize the diverse contributions of various age groups and portray the continuing contributions of maturing members of society.

E. Ideology - Material shall present basic primary and factual information on an ideology or philosophy of government, which exerts or has exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, over civilization or society, past or present. This material shall not be selected with the intention to sway reader judgment and shall be related to the maturity level of the intended audience.

F. Profanity and Sex- Material shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality by the teacher librarians and licensed staff, who will take into consideration their reading of public and community standards of morality.

G. Controversial Issues--The instructional materials on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

The selection decision should be made on the basis of whether the material presents an accurate representation of society and culture, whether the circumstances depicted are realistically portrayed, or whether the material has literary or social value when the material is viewed as a whole.

These guidelines shall not be construed in such a manner as to preclude materials, which accurately represent the customs, morals, manners, culture, or society of a different time or a different place.

III. Procedure for Selection

A. Material purchased for libraries and classrooms shall be recommended for purchase by the licensed personnel, in consultation with administrative staff, school library staff, and students or an ad hoc committee as appointed by the board. The material recommended for purchase shall be approved by the appropriate building administrator.

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1. The materials selected shall support stated objectives and goals of the school district. Specifically, the goals are:
 - a. To acquire materials and provide service consistent with the demands of the curriculum;
 - b. To develop students' skills and resourcefulness in the use of libraries and learning resources;
 - c. To effectively guide and counsel students in the selection and use of materials and libraries;
 - d. To foster in students a wide range of significant interests;
 - e. To provide opportunities for aesthetic experiences and development of an appreciation of the fine arts;
 - f. To provide materials to motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behaviors and to comprehend their own duties and responsibilities as citizens in a pluralistic democracy;
 - g. To encourage lifelong education through the use of the library; and,
 - h. To work cooperatively and constructively with the instructional and administrative staff in the school.
2. Materials selected shall be consistent with stated principles of selection. These principles are:
 - a. To select material, within established standards, which will meet the goals and objectives of the school district;
 - b. To consider the educational characteristics of the community in the selection of materials within a given category;
 - c. To present the sexual, racial, religious and ethnic groups in the community by:
 1. Portraying people, both men and women, adults and children, whatever their ethnic, religious or social class identity, as human and recognizable, displaying a familiar range of emotions, both negative and positive.
 2. Placing no constraints on individual aspirations and opportunity.
 3. Giving comprehensive, accurate, and balanced representation to all groups - in art and science, history and literature, and in all other fields of life and culture.
 4. Providing abundant recognition of all groups by showing them frequently in positions of leadership and authority.
 - d. To intelligently, quickly, and effectively anticipate and meet needs through awareness of subjects of local, national and international interest and significance; and,
 - e. To strive for impartiality in the selection process.
3. The materials selected shall meet stated selection criteria. These criteria are:
 - a. Authority-Author's qualifications - education, experience, and previously published works;
 - b. Reliability:
 1. Accuracy-Meaningful organization and emphasis on content, meets the material's goals and objectives, and presents authoritative and realistic factual material.
 2. Current-Presentation of content which is consistent with the finding of recent and authoritative research.
 - c. Treatment of subject-Shows an objective reflection for the multiethnic character and cultural diversity of society.

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- d. Language:
 - 1. Vocabulary-Does not use words which may result in negative value judgments about groups of people;
 - 2. Compatible to the reading level of the student for whom it is intended.
- e. Format:
 - 1. Book
 - a. Adequate and accurate index;
 - b. Paper of good quality and color;
 - c. Print adequate and well spaced; .
 - d. Adequate margins;
 - e. Firmly bound; and,
 - f. Cost.
 - 2. Nonbook
 - a. Flexibility, adaptability;
 - b. Curricular orientation of significant interest to students;
 - c. Appropriate for audience;
 - d. Accurate authoritative presentation;
 - e. Good production qualities (fidelity, aesthetically adequate);
 - f. Durability; and,
 - g. Cost.
 - 3. Illustrations of book and non-book materials should:
 - a. Depict instances of fully integrated grouping and settings to indicate equal status and non segregated social relationships;
 - b. Make clearly apparent the identity of minority individuals;
 - c. Contain pertinent and effective illustrations.
 - 4. Flexible to enable the teacher to use parts at a time and not follow a comprehensive instructional program on a rigid frame of reference.
- f. Special Features:
 - 1. Bibliographies
 - 2. Glossary
 - 3. Current charts, maps, etc.
 - 4. Visual aids Index
 - 5. Special activities to stimulate and challenge students
 - 6. Provide a variety of learning skills.
- g. Potential use:
 - 1. Will it meet the requirement of reference work?
 - 2. Will it help students with personal problems and adjustments?
 - 3. Will it serve as a source of information for teachers and librarians?
 - 4. Does it offer an understanding of cultures other than the student's own and is it free of racial, religious, age, disability, ethnic, and sexual stereotypes?
 - 5. Will it expand students' sphere of understanding and help them to understand the ideas and beliefs of others?

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6. Will it help students and teachers keep abreast of and understand current events?
7. Will it foster and develop hobbies and special interest?
8. Will it help develop aesthetic tastes and appreciation?
9. Will it serve the needs of students with special needs?
10. Does it have inspirational value?
11. Is it relevant to the subject?
12. Will it stimulate a student's interest?

4. Gifts of library or instructional materials may be accepted if the gift meets existing criteria for library and instructional materials. The acceptance and placement of such gifts shall be within the discretion of the board.

5. In order to provide a current, highly usable collection of materials, teacher-librarians, will ensure constant and continuing renewal of the collection, not only the addition of up-to-date materials, but by the judicious elimination of materials, which no longer meet school district, needs or find use. The process of weeding instructional materials will be done according to established and accepted standards for determining the relevance and value of materials in a given context.