

Instruction

Selection of Library Materials

Objectives of Selection

The primary objective of the school's educational media centers is to implement, enrich and support the educational programs of the school. It is the duty of the center to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal, and the presentation of different points of view.

To this end, the Board of Education of David City Public Schools reaffirms the objectives of the Standards of School Media Programs and asserts that the responsibility of the school library media center is:

1. To provide a comprehensive collection of instructional materials (both print and non-print) selected in compliance with basic, written selection principles, and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials.
2. To provide materials that will support and enrich the curriculum, taking into consideration the individuals' needs, and the varied interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served.
3. To provide materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge, and that will develop literacy, cultural aesthetic appreciation and ethical standards.
4. To provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily life.
5. To provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation for different points of view on moral, ethical, intellectual, political, religious and cultural issues so that students may make intelligent judgments in their daily lives and develop under guidance, the practice of critical thinking and inquiry.
6. To provide materials which promote independent study and encourage recreational reading.
7. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library media center.

Responsibility for Selection of Materials

The David City Public Schools Board of Education is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of David City Public Schools.

The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials for the library media center is delegated to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school system.

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The professional staff should select materials for the media programs in consultation with the administration, faculty and students. The final recommendation for purchase rests with the library media specialist with the approval of the superintendent.

Criteria for Selection of Instructional Materials

(The term, materials, as used in this policy, includes both print and non-print materials.)

- A. The needs of the individual school based on knowledge of the curriculum and the existing collection are given first considerations in the selection of materials. Requests from faculty and students are also given consideration.

Materials for purchase are considered on the basis of:

1. Importance of subject matter to the collection.
2. Authenticity of subject matter determined by the accuracy of the content and by the qualifications of the author and publisher or producer of the material.
3. Appropriateness of subject matter, vocabulary, content, concepts themes and style to the purpose and students for which the book was selected.
4. Contribution to literary appreciation and aesthetic growth by means of artistic presentation, insight into human and social conditions, and/or originality.
5. Contemporary significance or permanence of subject matter.
6. Providing representation of varying points of view.
7. Technical quality of material.
8. Format.
9. Price.

(An item need not meet all of the criteria above to be acceptable)

- B. Major areas of controversial materials are religion, ideologies, drugs, sex, politics, science and economics. Consideration should be given to the following areas when selecting controversial materials:
 1. Provide factual, unbiased selections of literary merit and reality.
 2. Reflect the value of the entire work rather than isolated incidents or passages that may be contained therein.
 3. Materials of contrasting points of view should be provided.

Procedures for Selection

In selecting materials for purchase, the media specialist evaluates the existing collection and consults reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids. Faculty members are also consulted to help evaluate possible selections.

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In specific areas the media specialist follows these procedures:

1. Gift materials are judged by the basic selection standards. The library personnel reserve the right to dispose of the gifts at their discretion.
2. Multiple items of outstanding and much in demand media are purchased as needed.
3. Worn or missing standard items are replaced periodically.
4. Out-of-date or no longer useful materials are withdrawn from the collection.
5. Commercially sponsored materials should meet the same standards of criteria for selection as other library media materials. They should also be free from excessive advertising and contribute to the educational program of the school.

Challenged Materials

Despite conscientious efforts to select valuable materials for student and teacher use, there may be occasional objections to a selection. If an objection is presented, the following procedure will be observed in recognizing the complaint in an impartial and factual manner.

The complainant should be treated with courtesy and invited to file a written complaint using the "Request for Reconsideration of Educational Materials in the School Media Center" form. This formal complaint will be reviewed by the Selection and Evaluation Committee; work-of-mouth complaints will not be considered without the written complaint form.

If a written complaint is made, the media specialist and superintendent should be notified immediately.

The materials in question will be reviewed by a committee appointed by the superintendent. The committee shall consist of two teachers from the school involved, the principal of that school, the library media specialist and two people from the community.

The material in controversy should be temporarily placed in the reserved section until the review has been completed. After the review, the material will be either withdrawn completely from use, placed in a reserved section for special use, or returned to the open stacks. Parents or guardians still retain the right to request that this objectionable material not be checked out to his child/children.

If the reviewers feel the selection is appropriate for student use, every effort should be made to vindicate the open use of the material based upon not only the credentials of the Selection and Evaluation Committee, but also upon current professional opinion (e.g. literary review, recommended college preparatory lists, ALA Booklist, Library Journal, etc.)

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At no time should the complainant be expected to approve the selection based solely upon the credentials of the members of the committee.

The Selection and Evaluation Committee will meet and review the appropriateness of the materials by:

1. Reading the materials completely.
2. Identifying the specific nature of the complaint. (What is objectionable?)
3. Checking the general acceptance of the materials.
4. Weighing the values and faults of the materials against each other and forming opinions based on the selection as a whole rather than on passages quoted out of context.
5. Discussing the merits and demerits of the material and writing a report on the out-come of the discussion.
6. Filing a copy of the report in the school offices.
7. Reporting the outcomes of the review to the complainant in writing.