

Selections from the Collection Development Manual



Curated, Compiled, and Created
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I. Our Library's Mission

The mission of the Sharon Elementary School Library is to provide a loving, engaging, and welcoming environment that inspires children to be enthusiastic readers, creative thinkers, fearless explorers, and lifelong learners.

That which we encourage and expect students--and ourselves--to do is best embodied by the word TEAMWORK:

Think
Empower
Aspire
Make
Wonder
Overcome
Read
Know

We think critically; we empower each other; we aspire to greatness; we make amazing things and we make a difference; we wonder about the world and work wonders in it; we overcome challenges together; we read deeply and widely; and thus, we know more.

II. On Intended Impacts

Our goal and intent is to meaningfully address the potential challenges children face today (including academic, behavioral, emotional, financial, and social), to foster safe and welcoming spaces that promote lifelong learning, and to put more children securely on their own unique paths to happy, fulfilling, and successful lives. Hence, our library will unequivocally support students and staff, and work tirelessly for the continued improvement of children's library services, so that:

- Our library reaches out and equitably serves ALL children in the community, understanding that our students come with a variety of interests and needs and come from a variety of backgrounds, including but not limited to abilities and neurological variations, class and financial status, gender identity and/or sexual orientation, race, and religion.
- The library “space” is at once both physical and virtual. It connects children to other people, printed materials, technology, and digital content, and invites them into the full scope of the library's assets and offerings.
- Students and staff co-create, co-evaluate, and co-evolve library programs and activities with library staff and skilled volunteers based on their passions and interests. These programs and activities are inclusive of a diversity of children's voices; connected to children's personal, work, or academic interests across multiple literacies; generate measurable outcomes for children's skills and knowledge; and are tailored to the community.
- To provide continuing education, resources, and support for professionals and paraprofessionals working with children.

(This statement was inspired by and adapted from that crafted by the Young Adults Library Services Association.)

III. On Intellectual Freedom

“Libraries are innately subversive institutions born of the radical notion that every single member of society deserves free, high quality access to knowledge and culture.”
--Dr. Matt Finch

Given the afore-mentioned mission statement for our library, with its emphasis on critical thinking, empowerment, social consciousness, and acquisition of knowledge, it becomes readily apparent that the importance of intellectual freedom is paramount. We hold it to be a self-evident truth that only with the freedom to widely and deeply explore diverse concepts and ideas can one grow intellectually and thus impact one's community and the world greatly and positively. As Lester Asheim stated: “...our responsibility is the defense of access to ideas, to information, esthetic pleasure, to recreation in its literal sense of recreation, and to knowledge or at least to the process that leads to knowledge” (1983).

Intellectual freedom is one of the core values of school librarians. In 2019, the American Librarian Association stated: “Intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored.” (“Intellectual freedom and censorship Q & A,” 2007, para.1) A school library is a place where students have the right to be active participants in the curation of their own world view; it is not a place where they are told

what to think or how to feel. Instead, it is our responsibility as librarians to provide them with access to a kaleidoscope of human experience. Our library's collection is designed to help students build the bridge between the known and the unknown.

Since the Supreme Court's decision in the 1969 *Tinker v. Des Moines* case, students have been guaranteed their First Amendment right to free speech in public schools. The court ruled that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate." ("Facts and case summary - *Tinker v. Des Moines*," para.5) In the school library, students retain the right to read and borrow materials and resources at their own discretion. In accordance with the Library Bill of Rights, our patrons will not be denied access to library resources because of "origin, age, background, or views" (Library Bill of Rights, ALA, 2019). Students have the right to inquire, to seek, and to question, and as school librarians, we are committed to defending student's First Amendment rights and their right to access information. As librarians, we will "advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information" (Library Bill of Rights, ALA, 2019). Students are encouraged to practice free inquiry and can do so free from the fear of being interrogated. Furthermore, as school librarians we protect learners' privacy and safeguard circulation data. Finally, in our library, students have the right to access the Internet in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

In summary and in closing, it is both appropriate and imperative to here include portions of the ALA's Freedom to Read Statement, which eloquently articulates just how important intellectual freedom is to us, both individually and as a democratic society:

“...Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience...We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture...The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

- 1) It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority...
- 2) Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated...

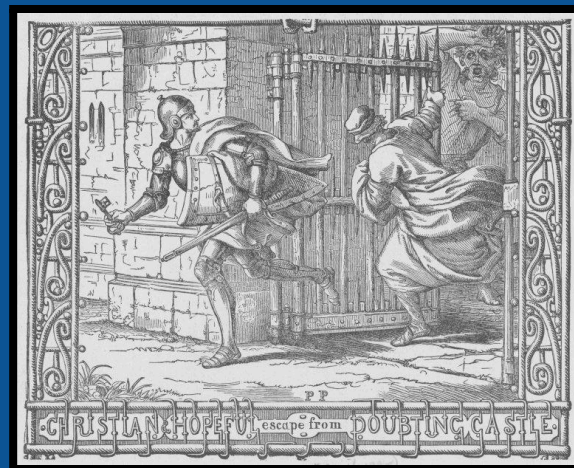
- 3) It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author...
- 4) There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others...
- 5) It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous...
- 6) It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information...
- 7) It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression...

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of

ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours. (American Library Association, 2018)”

Links to Relevant Online Position Statements:

- ❖ American Library Association. 2019. Library Bill of Rights.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- ❖ American Library Association. 2018. The Freedom to Read Statement.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>
- ❖ American Association of School Librarians. (AASL). 2010. Intellectual Freedom.
http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aaslissues/intellectual_freedom_brochure1210.pdf
- ❖ American Library Association. 2007. Intellectual freedom and censorship Q & A.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/faq>



IV. On Defining a School Library, Its Purpose, & Its Collection

The essential nature of the Sharon Elementary School library is fully aligned with that described and detailed by George Eberhart, specifically:

“A library is a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is (1) organized by information professionals or other experts who (2) provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and (3) offer targeted services and programs (4) with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences (5) and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole.” (Eberhart, 2010)

The purpose of the school library collection is:

- ❖ To ensure students and staff are provided access to all materials in various formats.
- ❖ To provide a collection that meets individual learning abilities, needs, and styles, and to provide information resources in a variety of formats that support the school’s curriculum and support lifelong learning and reading skills.
- ❖ To provide materials that will stimulate the acquisition of factual knowledge as well as the development of literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

- ❖ To provide materials containing diverse views on wide-ranging and even controversial issues so that students may develop the practice and skills of critical reading, thinking, and decision-making.
- ❖ To provide materials representative of diverse religious, ethnic, political, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
- ❖ 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 all users of the library media center. (Endahl, J.)

Above all, the school library encourages creativity of thought and in deed, exploration of the natural and cultural world and the myriad of viewpoints found therein, and lifelong learning in any and all subjects and disciplines. As stated by the American Library Association:

“Learning for life...whether the focus is on readiness for the next grade or college and career readiness, the school library program plays a crucial role in preparing students for informed living in the 21st century. The school library program provides learning opportunities that enable students to become efficient and effective in the pursuit of information.

Beyond its curricular role, the school library program gives each individual member of the learning community a venue for exploring questions that arise out of individual curiosity and personal interest. As part of the school library program, the school librarian provides

leadership in the use of information technologies and instruction for both students and staff in how to use them constructively, ethically, and safely. The school librarian offers expertise in accessing and evaluating information, using information technologies, and collections of quality physical and virtual resources. In addition, the school librarian possesses dispositions that encourage broad and deep exploration of ideas as well as responsible use of information technologies. These attributes add value to the school community.

The school library represents for students one of our most cherished freedoms--the freedom to speak our minds and hear what others have to say. Students in America have the right to choose what they will read, view, or hear and are expected to develop the ability to think clearly, critically, and creatively about their choices, rather than allowing others to do this for them.”

As such, and when it comes to the collection, accessibility and diversity are key. To quote Angelica Banks in *Finding Serendipity*:

“Whether or not you can see it, the Library is always there.” (Banks, 2013).

V. On Selection

The school librarian is responsible for the review, evaluation, and selection of materials and resources for the school library collection, and is guided by the system-level selection policy that embodies the philosophy and procedures set forth in national, state, and

county documents, as well as the standards established by the American Association of School Librarians. The school librarian works cooperatively with administrators, teachers, students, parents and other professional specialists to provide resources which pique student interest, represent diverse points of view, stimulate growth in thinking skills, and promote the overall educational program. The school library collection is developed to meet both curricular, professional, and personal needs; to ensure that these needs are met, the school librarian applies selection criteria and uses recommended selection tools. All purchases, including gifts, should meet the same selection standards.

Selection Criteria for School Library Materials

❖ **Appropriate for recommended levels and needs**

- School library materials should be accessible to students of varied abilities and staff members of varied areas, departments, and grade levels, and should meet informational and interest needs of students and staff.

❖ **Accurate in terms of content**

- Generally, school library materials will contribute to the objectives of the Virginia Standards of Learning.
- Fact matter; ergo, school library materials should present facts in an objective manner. Authority of the author, organization, and publisher/producer may be a consideration in selection.

❖ **Reflective of the pluralistic nature of a global society**

- School library materials should provide a global perspective and promote diversity as a positive attribute of our society. It is important to include materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures.

❖ **Free of bias and stereotype**

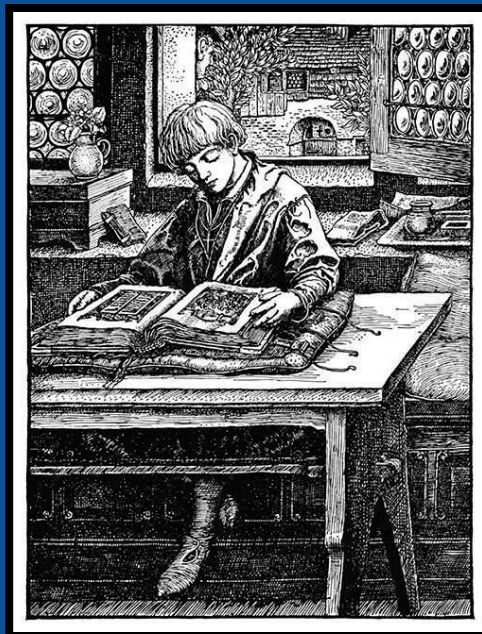
- Materials should reflect the basic humanity of all people and be free of purposeful stereotypes, caricatures, distorted dialect, sexual bias, and other offensive characteristics. School library materials concerning religious, social, and political content should inform rather than indoctrinate.

❖ **Representative of differing viewpoints on controversial subjects**

- Students have the right to information on both sides of a controversial issue. By having access to a variety of resources, students will have the knowledge base to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The school library provides free and equitable access to all information.

❖ **Appropriate format to effectively teach the curriculum**

- School library materials should be available in a variety of formats (e.g., print, nonprint, electronic, multimedia) to meet the needs and learning styles of a diverse student population. Availability and compatibility of equipment should be considered for use with materials.
- ❖ **Recent copyright date as appropriate to the subject**
 - School library materials should be assessed for the currency of the presented information as it relates to the content and purpose of the item and/or material(s).
- ❖ **Acceptable in literary style and technical quality**
 - Literary quality, technical merit, physical arrangement, and aesthetic characteristics should be considered as integral components in the evaluation of all media formats.
- ❖ **Cost effective in terms of use**
 - School library materials should be evaluated for cost effectiveness in terms of accessibility, projected use, and durability.
- ❖ **Technology**
 - School library technology materials should be up-to-date, of acceptable technical quality, user-friendly, and accessible.



VI. On Handling Challenges

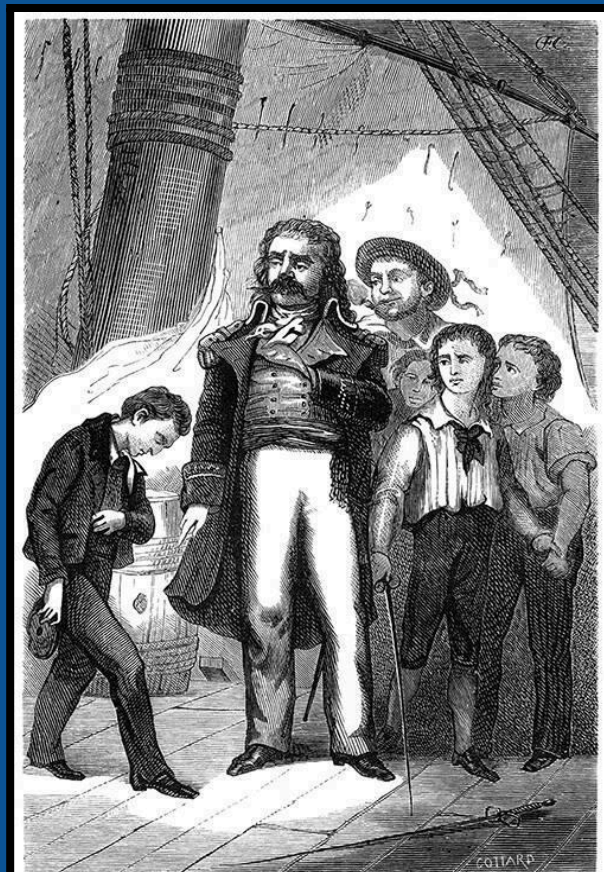
Occasionally, objections to instructional materials are made, despite the quality of the selection process. Alleghany County Public Schools and the Sharon Elementary School Library support the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, and The Freedom to Read. In the event that materials are questioned by parents/guardians of students of Sharon Elementary School, the principles of intellectual freedom, the right to access materials, and the integrity and ideals of the library and its resources must be defended rather than the materials themselves.

Instructional Material Review/Challenge Procedures:

1. For the duration of the review process, challenged materials will remain available as part of the library collection.
2. Requests for reconsideration of materials shall first be directed to the school librarian in a good faith attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved, a subsequent meeting with the school librarian and building administrator, along with the complainant, will be held to further address and hopefully resolve the issue.
4. If the issue remains unresolved, the complainant will receive a copy of the Challenge Policy and will complete, within 10 working days, the Citizens Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form to lodge a formal request for review with school administration. The complainant must also read the challenged material in its entirety.
5. Within 10 working days of administration receiving the formal complaint, a School Materials Committee will be convened. This committee will consist of 1) an administrator or designee, 2) a teacher, 3) a librarian, and 4) a parent. If this committee can agree on a recommendation acceptable to all parties, the principal will carry out the recommendation of the committee. The principal

shall also file a written report of the committee findings with the superintendent.

6. If the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, principal, or school librarian, all relevant materials shall be forwarded to the superintendent. A division level committee shall be convened by the superintendent or his/her designee to review the materials and the school committee report and make a recommendation to the superintendent. This committee will be comprised of 1) the superintendent or designee, 2) a parent from the school involved, 3) a parent from another school of the same level in the district, 4) the principal of the school involved, 5) Central Office library supervisor, 6) a librarian from another school of the same level in the district.
7. The superintendent will take the committee's recommendation to the school board for final action.
8. The school board will make a final decision and instruct the principal to retain, modify, or withdraw the challenged material(s). The principal will subsequently notify the complainant of the school board's decision.



CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

(To be submitted to the Principal)

Type of material(s) Book ____ Ebook ____ Video ____ CD ____ DVD ____
Magazine ____ Audio Recording ____ Other ____

Author_____

Title_____

Request Initiated by_____

Telephone_____ Address_____

City_____ Zip Code_____

Complainant Represents:

____Self

____Organization (Please Name)_____

____Other Group (Please Identify)_____

1. To what in the material do you object?: (Please be specific; cite instances.)
2. What do you feel might be the result of using this material?
3. For what age group would you recommend this material?
4. Is there anything of merit in this material?
5. Did you read, view, or listen to material in its entirety, as required for reconsideration?
6. Are you aware of the judgment of this item by literary critics or reference sources?
(If so, please share your thoughts).
7. What do you believe is the purpose of this material?
8. What would you like your school to do about this material?
____Do not assign it to my child
____Withdraw it from all students as well as from my child
____Send it to a committee for reevaluation
9. In its place, what material of equal quality would you recommend?

Signature of Complainant_____Date_____

Received by_____Date_____

Record of School Materials Committee Findings

Date: _____

Title for Reconsideration: _____

Author: _____

Reconsideration Committee Members Present:

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

The committee members have read, viewed, or listened to the resource in its entirety.

Summary of the conclusion of our findings:

The recommendation of this committee for the material considered is:

_____ No action

_____ Remove from the school media center

_____ Restrict to specific approved groups

_____ Other: (explain)

Complainant will be notified by _____ (date)

Record of Division Reconsideration Committee Findings

Date: _____

Title for Reconsideration: _____

Author: _____

Reconsideration Committee Members Present:

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

Name: _____ Title/position: _____

The committee members have read, viewed, or listened to the resource in its entirety.

Summary of the conclusion of our findings:

The recommendation of this committee for the material considered is:

_____ No action

_____ Remove from the school media center

_____ Restrict to specific approved groups

_____ Other: (explain)

Complainant will be notified by _____ (date)

VII. On Evaluating the Collection

In order to adapt to the continuously changing needs and interests of our students, the collection will be constantly evaluated to maintain quantity, quality, and currency.

The librarian will keep a current curriculum map that reflects the educational topics presented in the classroom. Collection maps will be generated through the use of the circulation system in order to highlight the quantity of resources available for specific sections of the collection along with the average copyright year. The curriculum map will then be compared to the collection maps in order to determine areas of need. School colleagues will be consulted to determine appropriate alignment and formatting of resources (Howard, 2010). The librarian will also read professional selection journals, attend conferences and webinars to keep up with popular trends when evaluating books read for pleasure (Kerby, 2019). Library resources will also be monitored through circulation frequency to evaluate their relevance.

