WINDHAM RAYMOND SCHOOL DISTRICT
Regional School Unit 14

228 Windham Center Road
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www.rsu14.org

Superintendent
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IMPORTANT: Community Update Regarding Curriculum & School Libraries
March 23, 2023

To RSU 14 Parents/Guardians:

This communication serves to provide clarification and guidance to you regarding RSU 14 policies pertaining to student curriculum and library materials. Respecting that there are many perspectives on the important issue of what materials are accessible by students, we want to make sure that you have necessary information to support your understanding. To begin, it is important for you to understand the difference between required curriculum and choice-based library materials that are available to students across the district.

REQUIRED CURRICULUM MATERIALS

Required curriculum for grades Pre-K through grade 12, including curriculum guides, state standards and performance indicators, assessment information, and other guiding documents can be found on the district website HERE. These resources can help families understand the knowledge and skills your child is expected to learn as they progress through each grade. In terms of instructional planning and lesson design, teachers select texts to support the approved curriculum (*Maine Learning Results*).

LIBRARY, CHOICE-BASED MATERIALS

In contrast, school libraries serve to integrate technology, support literacy, encourage innovation, and develop critical thinkers who are ready to tackle the challenges of the 21st century. When selecting books to add to our library collection, librarians read professional reviews and consult professional library sites, such as the American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians. Students can choose whether or not they would like to check out a library book, as these resources are not part of the required curriculum.

RELEVANT POLICIES

Some of the relevant School Board policies that drive educational programming and processes are listed below. These apply to both required curriculum and choice-based library materials.

- Policy IJJ: *Instructional and Library Materials Selection* guides staff as they review materials and plan instruction, describes the process to be used in approving materials for the library, and details how parents can express concerns about materials that have been approved to be in the school library.
- Policy IJJ-E: *Citizen's Challenge of Educational Media Form* can be used by families if there is a concern about educational materials in the district collection.
- Policy IMBB: *Accommodation of Sincere Beliefs in Required Instruction.* This policy outlines the process for parents to request accommodations to required instruction materials.
- Policy IMB: *Teaching About Controversial/Sensitive Issues* also guides educators as they plan units of instruction.

BOOK CHALLENGES & NEXT STEPS

The following steps will be taken in response to recent book challenges:

1. The School Board's Policy Committee will be reviewing Policy IJJ: *Instructional and Library Materials Selection* to examine the need for possible revisions.
2. All book challenges (Policy IJJ, Challenged Materials Procedure, steps 1 and 2 completed) will be placed on our district's website HERE, along with updates regarding where each book is in the challenge process.

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3. The Administrative Team will examine the existing processes and procedures for instructional and library materials selection in order to determine whether or not refinements are warranted.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Regards,

Christopher Howell Christine Frost-Bertinet