

Fort Worth ISD Library Media Services: Library Materials Selection Criteria and Collection Development Guidelines

Aligned with board policy EFB(Local)

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide the librarian with the tools necessary to create a developmentally appropriate collection in compliance with Board policy, state requirements, and librarian best practices, that equitably represents the community/clientele it serves.

Goals:

In addition to the requirements in state law and rules, District library collections shall:

1. Present multiple viewpoints related to controversial issues
2. Provide a wide range of background information that will enable students to make intelligent decisions in their daily lives.
3. Include accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources.
4. Have a high degree of potential user appeal and interest.
5. Offer a global perspective promoting equity of access, including print and nonprint materials such as electronic and multimedia, to meet individual learner's needs.
6. Represent diverse viewpoints and cultures appropriate to each campus to ensure the collection embodies the unique backgrounds of its student population.

Responsibility for Selection:

The district shall ensure librarians, professional library staff, and other designated professional staff trained on the proper collection development standards select and acquire library materials in accordance with state law, this collection development policy, and administrative procedures. Items donated to libraries are subject to these guidelines and must meet criteria.

Accessibility:

The district library catalog, as well as the district's collection development guidelines, will be made available to parents and the public online via the Fort Worth ISD Library Media Services website. Campus library catalogs may also be accessed from individual campus websites. Physical access to campus libraries should be arranged at the campus level.

Parental Involvement:

Fort Worth ISD recognizes that parents and guardians are the primary decision makers regarding their student's access to library material. While students are given the opportunity to self-select library materials and may be assisted by district staff, the ultimate determination of appropriateness for an individual remains with the student and parent or guardian. Special

considerations regarding student choice in the library should be communicated between the parent/guardian and the campus librarian or teacher. Parents, as well as students, educators, and community members are encouraged to communicate with campus librarians regarding library materials suggestions.

Book Selection Criteria:

Criteria	Purpose
Integral to the instructional program.	<p>Books in the library are designed to support content knowledge, process skills, or both. Books whose main subjects do not appear directly in the TEKS are designed to support the development of reading and thinking skills. There is a correlation between interest-based reading selections and academic performance. Research shows that students who read books of interest read more often and perform better in reading than their counterparts. Library books are diverse in topics, themes, genres, formats, and characters so all students can find books of interest to develop their reading skills.</p>
Reflect the interests and needs of students and faculty	<p>Librarians must consider factors such as circulation data, student, faculty, and parent suggestions, curricular topics, and current events to identify needs. Not all books may be of interest to all students, but all students should find something of interest to them and see themselves and others reflected in the materials.</p>
Alignment: Appropriate for students' reading levels and understanding	<p>Library materials need two professional reviews for at least two of the grade levels served (or a level below) except early childhood campuses which may purchase books with reviews including birth through 1st grade. Acceptable professional library review sources include Booklist, the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, Horn Book, School Library Journal, and VOYA (ceased publication but may be used for older titles.) Any professional curricular review sites may also be used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Middle Grade (MG) novels are traditionally geared toward ages 9-13. ● YA may only be purchased at secondary campuses. Be cautious that the age of the characters matches the ages of your students. ● Materials rated Adult may only be purchased at high schools and must be read

	<p>by 2 librarians at 2 different schools before purchasing/circulating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If reviews contain age recommendations that span multiple levels (ex. 5-8th grade or YA), look at the ages of the characters and the theme(s) of the book to determine if it is an appropriate fit for your students. • If three or more professional reviews can be found, the most common age range should be used.
Literary/Artistic Value/Merit	<p>A book needs to have at least two professional reviews that favorably address the quality of the work. Use of language, character, and plot development, illustrations or photographs, reader engagement or readability, and technical qualities all speak to literary or artistic value and merit.</p>
Balanced Collection Representing Various Views	<p>Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people in the library's community. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation. A balanced presentation of opposing issues in nonfiction must be presented either in the individual book or by including multiple books within a library.</p>
Accuracy and Clarity	<p>A book needs to have at least two professional reviews that favorably addresses the book's accuracy and clarity. Author's reputation, potential bias, credentials, and approach to subject matter may be considered. Balanced presentation of opposing issues in nonfiction must be presented either in the individual book or with the inclusion of multiple books within a library. Fiction must be considered "authentic literature", and if the book is above or representative of a particular group, the author's belonging to that group may be considered.</p>
Obscene Content / Harmful Material – see EFB (LOCAL)	<p>Obscene content is not protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Regardless of other criteria, titles with obscene content (as defined by Penal Code 43.21 (1)) or harmful material (as defined by Penal Code 43.24(a)) will be deselected and may not be included in library collections.</p>

When Professional Reviews are Unavailable:

Some but not all types of materials may be selected when professional reviews are not available. If eligible for selection, these items must still meet the selection criteria. Librarians may use the table below to determine whether they can order an item.

Type of Material	Appropriateness, Literary Value, & Presentation of Information
<p>Nonfiction (neither formulaic nor literary)</p> <p>*This does not include Graphic Novels.</p>	<p>If no professional reviews can be located, the publisher-designated age range may be used. The following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A publisher's age range or interest level must be designated. ● If the publisher designated age range spans multiple levels, the librarian must use both the publisher designated age range, interest level and research on the book to determine the primary target audience. ● Adult (AD) designated content may only be purchased by high schools if no “obscene” or “harmful” content is included. ● Young Adult (YA) may only be purchase at secondary campuses. <p>The librarian must carefully weigh the following criteria when making a decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether the objective of having the material in the collection could be fulfilled by another work with a positive review ● Publisher’s reputation ● Author’s reputation ● Curricular needs ● Endorsement by a professional association ● The need for a balanced and diverse collection ● Providing balanced viewpoints either within the book or within the library collection.
<p>Graphic Novels/ MANGA Rating Scale:</p>	<p>Librarians must research to determine the intended audience for the content.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E- Everybody may be in all schools • Y (youth, ages 10+) and T (teens, ages 13+) for middle school and/or high school libraries • T+ or OT (older teens, ages 16+) for high school libraries only. • M (mature, 18+) and AD (adult) may not be purchased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary librarians may select Manga but must first research individual book content and determine if it meets all board policy-aligned selection criteria. • Items marked “mature” or “explicit” may not be purchased • Books marked for “older teens,” 16+, “seinen,” or “josei” may only be considered at schools serving 9-12 grade students after being read and approved by two different librarians at two different schools.
Literary Fiction and Literary Nonfiction	Require two professional reviews to purchase. This includes memoirs, biographies, and poetry.
Formulaic Fiction Series	If a positive professional review exists for a book in a formulaic fiction series, it will suffice for the entire series UNLESS the character ages as the series progresses. Once the character ages out of the age of the school’s students, the rest of the series should not be purchased at that school.
Formulaic Nonfiction Series	If a positive professional review exists for one of the books in a formulaic nonfiction series, it will suffice for the entire series—for example, Animal Allies by Capstone Publishing. One review serves for all five titles in the series.
Items in Other Languages	If a professional review cannot be found for a specific translation, a book may still be selected if the English language version meets all selection criteria.
Items Originally Published before the 1970’s.	Professional reviews for classic books considered part of the “literary canon” or religious or historical texts may not be available. In these instances, the book may still be selected if research indicates it meets all Fort Worth ISD selection criteria. Librarians should consider whether or not items are in the public domain and the degree of student appeal in their decisions.

Where Can I Find Reviews?

Gale Academic OneFile publication Search Gale Educator’s Reference Center	Vendor Sites such as Mackin, Titlewave, Perma-Bound, or Bound-to-Stay-Bound. Get a copy of the actual review (Library Services lookup).
--	---

What if I Cannot Find Two Positive Reviews Online?

Check if other district libraries have the same title at your level. If they have it, you can purchase it.	Consider obtaining a copy from another school or the public library to read before purchasing.
Is the book on a state-recommended reading list? Lists from ALA (American Library Association) or TLA have age suggestions that help guide librarians to the intended audience.	Nonfiction does not always have reviews on every title in a series. Check to see if the series has been reviewed positively. If so, then you may purchase this title.

Maintaining the Collection:

In accordance with state guidelines and District administrative procedures, collections should be evaluated and updated regularly based on the collections’ age, relevance, diversity, and variety. This is done at the campus level by the campus librarian, who is tasked with repair, replacement, and removal of items as necessary. (See weeding procedures below) This includes removal of items found to contain “harmful” or “obscene” content as per EF(Legal). Maintenance also includes completing an annual year-end inventory of the collection.

Weeding the Library Collection:

Selection of resources is an ongoing process that includes the removal of resources no longer appropriate and the periodic replacement or repair of resources that still have educational value. Campus librarians should evaluate collections on at least an annual basis to ensure that a collection contains only those resources that are accurate, current and relevant to the curricular and recreational programs of the school. Items which no longer meet these criteria, as well as books that contain “harmful” or “obscene” material (EF(Legal)) shall be removed from the collection by District library staff. Library staff will utilize the CREW Method for Weeding-
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/pubs/crew/index.html>

In accordance with EF(Legal), A district possesses significant discretion to determine the content of its school libraries. A district must, however, exercise its discretion in a manner consistent with the First Amendment.

Students' First Amendment rights are implicated by the removal of books from the shelves of a school library. A district shall not remove materials from a library for the purpose of denying students access to ideas with which the district disagrees. A district may remove materials because they are pervasively vulgar or based solely upon the educational suitability of the books in question.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Librarians receiving a concern or complaint about a book or other resource in the school library collection should first listen and acknowledge the person's concern regarding the material and follow the procedure set forth in **Fort Worth ISD Board Policy EF(LOCAL)** regarding an informal reconsideration of library materials. The librarian or administrator shall explain the selection process and discuss the intended purpose for the library material.

The librarian or administrator shall then offer the concerned parent or guardian an alternative library material to be used by the child in place of the material and, if requested, shall restrict the child's access to the material objected to by the parent or guardian.

If the complainant wishes to make a **formal challenge**, the principal shall provide the complainant a copy of **Board Policy EF(LOCAL)** and a Request for Reconsideration form. <https://forms.gle/QFKRNMJ2gfGYU7g46>

Formal Reconsiderations:

A complainant shall make any formal objection to library material on the form provided by the District and shall submit the completed and signed form to the principal. Upon receipt of the form, the principal shall follow the reconsideration process described in Board policy EF(local).

Appeals:

The complainant may appeal the decision of the reconsideration committee in accordance with appropriate complaint policies, starting with the appropriate administrator. [See Board policy DGBA, FNG, and GF]

Guiding Principles for Challenges:

See Board policy EF(Local)