

# Book Policy Manual Section 300 - Instruction Title Educational Materials Selection Criteria and Procedures Code 361-Rule Status

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## A. Criteria For Selection

As appropriate, educational materials selected shall be consistent with the following stated criteria of selection:

1. Relation to Existing Collection - The materials should make a significant contribution to the balance of the collection for which they are selected.
2. Relation to Curriculum - Materials should be selected for their contribution to the implementation of the school district's curriculum.
3. Accuracy and Authenticity - The content of materials should be valid and reliable. Those materials that are fiction should stimulate creative thought, diversity of thinking and new understanding and insights.
4. Authority - Consideration should be given to the qualifications and significance of those responsible for creating the material (author, producer, publisher).
5. Arrangement and Treatment - The materials should be clearly presented and well-organized. Concepts should be appropriate for the intended audience. All textbooks should have a readability study before they are purchased for use in the district.
6. Cultural Pluralism - State law provides that students must have access to a current well-balanced collection of books, basic reference materials, periodicals and audio-visual materials which depict in an accurate and unbiased way the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society.
7. Whole Versus Part - Each item should be approached from a broad perspective, looking at the work as a whole and judging controversial elements in context rather than as isolated parts. Periodicals, for example, should be selected and purchased for their overall reputation and should not be rejected because of an occasional article which may be offensive to some.
8. Recency - In specific subject areas (such as science or technology), materials should be examined to verify that information is current. The copyright date is one indicator.
9. Format - The medium selected to present the material should be appropriate to the purpose.
10. Budget - The budget will provide sufficient funds for expansion of the collection, keeping the collection up-to-date and meeting the needs of a diverse student population. Duplication of materials beyond five copies should be considered as texts and purchased from supplementary or basic text materials accounts.
11. Other Issues - In potentially sensitive areas (e.g., race, sex, religion, political theory and ideology), materials should be selected for their strengths and/or significance rather than

rejected for their weakness. The selection of materials should be in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. Treatment of Controversial Issues - Materials should be selected to represent the fullest possible range of contrasting points of view in order to provide a balanced collection of such subjects.
- b. Treatment of Religion - Factual and unbiased materials about religion should be chosen to educate not indoctrinate. Works of fiction should be chosen based on the general literary value.
- c. Treatment of Sex and Profanity - The use of profanity or sexual incidents in a literary work should not automatically disqualify such material. The decision should be made on the basis of the work's general literary value rather than on some isolated parts, and on whether it deals with situations realistically.
- d. Treatment of Human Physiology - Materials on human physiology, physical maturation or personal hygiene should be chosen for accuracy and appropriateness for their intended audience.
- e. Treatment of Biased Materials - Educational materials which unfairly, inaccurately or viciously treat a particular race, sex, ethnic group, age group, religion, etc., shall not be selected unless there exists a legitimate educational purpose, such as analysis, observation, historical development or interpretation.

#### B. Selection Procedures

1. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS (IMC) - The persons responsible for coordinating the selection of media center materials and making the recommendation for requests are the certified media professionals and building principal. They shall evaluate available resources and curriculum needs. Professional review catalogs, reviews from professional organizations, and other selection aids shall be used to guide material selection. IMC materials shall be examined and previewed whenever possible.

Requests and suggestions for purchase of IMC materials shall be solicited from faculty members to the greatest extent possible. Recommendations of students, district personnel and individuals in the community will also be considered.

The final selection of IMC materials shall be made by the media professionals, in cooperation with the building principal, in the individual schools. The purchased materials shall be catalogued and circulated through the individual school IMC.

The IMC will be supplemented, whenever possible, by inter-library loan within the Hamilton School District and Waukesha County Federated Library System.

2. COMMERCIAL ENTERTAINMENT FILMS OR MEDIA - Commercial entertainment films or media having substantial educational value may be appropriate to the content and level of the subject being studied. In those cases, faculty will show those portions/clips of the film directly related to the curriculum. Any film to be shown in its entirety must be approved in advance by the building principal. At the K-8 level, commercial films or portion thereof that are unrated or rated "PG" or "PG-13" shall not be shown to students in the District without the approval of the building principal and advance written notice to the parents/guardians. Such notice shall contain an accurate description of the contents and the educational value

of the film. A parent/guardian not wishing to have his/her children participate in viewing a particular film or portion thereof may indicate this decision in a note to the teacher. A parent/guardian not wishing to have his/her children participate in any films during the course of a year may indicate this decision in a note to the teacher. The decision of the parent/guardian will be respected and an assignment of equal value may be given as an alternative to attending the showing of such film.

No films or portion thereof having a rating of "R" shall be shown to students at any level in the District except as otherwise specifically provided. An "R" rated film may be shown only to high school students if each of the following conditions are met:

- a. The film's content has substantial educational value, is specifically related to the high school curriculum and is age appropriate.
- b. The film's use as an instructional material has been reviewed and approved by a special committee appointed by the District Administrator or designee, consisting of one high school administrator, one high school teacher, two high school parents, and Supervisor of Instructional Services.
- c. Parent/guardian written permission is obtained prior to showing the film to students. The parent notice will contain an accurate description of the contents of the film, its educational value, and reason the film was rated "R". The decision of the parent/guardian will be respected. If the parent does not wish to have the student view the film, an alternate learning experience will be provided

The parent's written permission slip will be maintained by the teacher for the balance of the year

No films having a rating of NC-17 or X shall be shown to students at any level in the district.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL SOFTWARE - The following will be considered when selecting software:

- a. Software Selection Criteria
  - i. Supports district curriculum.
  - ii. Involves students in applying higher level thinking skills. (While there may be limited uses for software that focuses on drill and practice, the software should also include components that encourage higher level thinking.)
  - iii. Includes clearly defined objectives that align with district instructional expectations.
  - iv. Provides flexible content (different levels of difficulty, content options, etc.)
  - v. Is developmentally appropriate.
  - vi. Is an effective instructional strategy.
  - vii. Testimonials from neighboring school districts supporting educational application, if possible.

b. Request Process

- i. Submit a special project request to the Educational Services office.
- ii. Proposal will be reviewed by the Supervisor of Instructional Services and the Manager of Information Technology.

c. Technical Review

- i. Test software for network compatibility, in multiple schools if necessary.
  - ii. Test for compatibility with multiple operating systems.
  - iii. Identify technical support available for the program, i.e., printed documentation, troubleshooting information, online or phone support, etc.
  - iv. All software purchases will be processed through the Information Technology Services office.
  - v. Core software, at the elementary level, will be implemented in all buildings.
4. OTHER MATERIALS - Supplementary materials other than IMC materials must be selected at the discretion of the classroom teacher in accordance with the Board's educational materials selection policy and its implementing procedures. This statement also applies to the selection of trade books used in the district's reading program.

C. Donated Materials

Gift materials must meet the same criteria as those selected for purchase and are accepted with the understanding that if they are not suitable, they may be returned or disposed of at the discretion of the professional personnel.

D. Weeding

Weeding insures a collection which is current and provides the best possible service through a collection of quality materials. Weeding should be a carefully planned, ongoing procedure reflecting the same care given to the original selection process. Weeding clears the collection of materials which have outlived their usefulness and should be done for the following reasons:

1. To improve the appearance of the collection;
2. To make appropriate use of space;
3. To increase circulation;
4. To increase usefulness of collection;
5. To improve service;
6. To increase respect for materials (e.g., materials are relevant and up-to-date);
7. To find weak areas in the collection; and

8. To facilitate staff development (e.g., use of faculty experience in subject areas which should increase faculty knowledge and use of the collection).

## Cross References

840, Public Gifts to the Schools