

Rule – Policy No. 361
PROCEDURES FOR
SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
AND REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LODI

The School District of Lodi shall comply with Standard H of the state educational standards (22.121.02)(h) which states in part: "All students shall be provided access to a current, balanced collection of books, basic reference materials, texts, periodicals, and audio-visual materials which depict in an accurate and unbiased way the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society."

The District shall also comply with Chapter PI 9 of Wisconsin Administrative Code which implements section 118.13 of the Wisconsin Statutes which prohibits discrimination and is intended to ensure equal treatment for all students.

In the selection of, distribution of, or use of instructional materials the School District of Lodi does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental emotional or learning disability or handicap.

Instructional Materials as used in this statement include: books, textbooks, periodicals, pamphlets, pictures, maps, films, recording, and all other materials which are used by the pupils and faculty in fulfilling the curriculum requirements of the school.

SECTION ONE - Philosophy

- A. The District Library Media Centers supplement classroom activity and are an integral part of all departmental curriculum. The center exists primarily for educational purposes. They offer enrichment for the students and resource materials for the faculty. Instructional materials are selected from all forms of media available for interest, vocabulary, maturity, and ability levels of all students within the district.
- B. The school library media center provides additional materials to attract students to reading, viewing and listening as sources of pleasure and recreation over and above needed subject content.
- C. The district library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information, ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program services of the district necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the Library Bill of Rights apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs.

School library media professionals assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of

intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School library media professionals work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Through resources, programming and educational process, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media professionals cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources appropriate to the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources which support the curriculum and are consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school district. Resources in school library media collections represent diverse points of view and current as well as historic issues.

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media professionals resist efforts by individuals to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, or hear.

Major barriers between students and resources include: imposing age or grade-level restrictions on the use of resources, limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information, charging fees for information in specific formats, requiring permission from parents or teachers, establishing restricted shelves or closed collections, and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

The school board adopts policies that guarantee student access to a broad range of ideas. School library media professional implement district policies and procedures in the school.

- D. Recognition is made that no one school library media center is going to meet all the needs of all the students. Therefore use will be made of interlibrary loans when needed.
- E. The selection of all books and materials, including textbooks and books purchased by teachers for classroom use and interlibrary loan materials will be in accordance with the guidelines established in this policy. All materials and books will be reviewed according to the procedure established in Section Five: Procedure for Handling Objections if an objection should be filed.

SECTION TWO - Criteria for selection of materials

- A. The selection of materials is a continuous process because of the changing curriculum content and the publishing of new materials. The selection process is as follows:

1. Materials including textbooks shall be selected by qualified representative personnel - librarians, teachers, and administrators through individual and/or committee study and recommendations.
2. The librarians, teachers and administrators shall be aided in their selection by the various standard lists and book catalogs approved by the American Library Association and the State Department of Public Instruction.
3. After textbooks have been selected in accordance with process outlined above, recommendations for textbooks to be adopted will be presented to the Board of Education in accordance with State Statute 118.03(1) and Board policy.

B. The following evaluative criteria are used as they apply.

1. The materials meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation and are appropriate to the ability and needs of the pupils in the various subject areas.
2. The materials are selected because of the content and the value of the work as a whole.
3. The materials contribute to literary appreciation or have aesthetic value.
4. The authors or producers are competent and qualified in the field.
5. The materials are objectively and impartially selected to provide a balanced collection for the library.
6. The materials present information for which the student is socially and emotionally prepared. For this reason an otherwise good book may be omitted from the collection.

SECTION THREE - Controversial materials, criticism and censorship

The school library media center stand for the freedom of communication, for the freedom of intellectual activity, and for the freedom of thought. It strives to provide an opportunity for students and teachers to gain information and the various point of view on controversial issues.

The major areas of controversial materials are race, sex, politics, religion, literature and economics. In selecting materials on any of the above areas the following criteria are given consideration.

1. The materials on controversial issues should be representative materials covering contrasting points of view.
2. The material does not unfairly or viciously disparage a particular race or religion. A writer's

expression of a certain viewpoint is not being considered a disparagement when it represents the historical or contemporary views held by some persons or groups.

3. The materials on religion are chosen to explain rather than convince and are selected to represent the field as widely as necessary for the school purposes.
4. The selection of materials on political theories and ideologies or on public issues is directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.
5. In a literary work of established quality, the use of profanity or the treatment of sex is not an adequate reason for eliminating the material from the school library media center.
6. Materials on physiology, physical maturation or personal hygiene should be accurate and in good taste.
7. Materials should be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.

SECTION FOUR - Gifts and commercially sponsored materials

The school library media centers welcome gifts and commercially sponsored materials provided:

1. They meet the same standards of selection as those applied to original purchases.
2. They can be integrated into the general collection and do not need special housing.
3. The staff may dispose of the gift at its discretion if it is out-of-date or in poor physical condition, not warranting the cost of repair.
4. They are of real value to the instructional program.
5. They are free from advertising which is excessive, obtrusive or objectionable.

SECTION FIVE - Procedure for handling objections

The review of questioned materials will be treated objectively, unemotionally, and as an important routine action. Every effort will be made to consider objections, keeping in mind the best interests of the student, the school, the curriculum, and the community. Since differences of opinion do exist in our society, the following procedure shall be observed to recognize those differences in an impartial and factual manner.

Request for reconsideration:

1. Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge instructional materials used in the district's educational program on the basis of appropriateness. This

procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the schools and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.

2. Each school and the school district's central office will keep on hand and make available reconsideration request forms. All formal objections to instructional materials must be made on this form.
3. The reconsideration request form shall be signed by the complainant and filed with the superintendent.
4. Within five business days of the filing of the form, the superintendent or person designated by the superintendent shall file the material in question with the reconsideration committee for re-evaluation. The committee shall recommend a disposition position to the office of the superintendent.
5. Generally, access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process. However, in unusual circumstances, the material may be removed temporarily.
6. The reconsideration committee.
 - a. The reconsideration committee shall be made up of seven members.
 1. One teacher designated annually by the superintendent.
 2. One school media specialist designated annually by the superintendent.
 3. One member of the administrative staff designated annually by the superintendent.
 4. Three members from the community appointed annually by the Board of Education.
 5. One high school student, selected annually from and by the student council.
 - b. The chairperson of the committee shall not be an employee or officer of the district. The secretary shall be an employee or officer of the district.
 - c. A calendar of subsequent regular meetings for the year shall be established and a chairperson and a secretary selected at the first meeting. All meetings of the reconsideration committee come under the open meeting law.
 - d. Special meetings may be called by the superintendent to consider temporary removal of materials in unusual circumstances. Temporary removal shall require majority vote of the committee.
 - e. The calendar of regular meetings and notice of special meetings shall be made public through appropriate student publications and other communication methods.
 - f. The committee shall receive all reconsideration request forms from the

superintendent.

- g. The procedure for the first meeting following receipt of a reconsideration request form is as follows:
 - 1. Examine the challenged resource;
 - 2. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resource;
 - 3. Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of the context;
 - 4. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program;
 - 5. Discuss the challenged item with the individual complainant.
 - 6. Prepare a written report.
- h. At a subsequent meeting, interested persons, including the complainant, may have the opportunity to share their views. The committee may request that individuals with special knowledge be present to give information to the committee.
- i. The complainant shall be kept informed by the secretary concerning the status of the complaint through the committee reconsideration process. The complainant and known interested parties shall be given appropriate notice of reconsideration committee meetings.
- j. At the second or a subsequent meeting, as desired, the committee shall make its decision in open session. The committee's final decision will be, (1) to maintain on open shelves, (2) to remove the challenged material from the total school environment, (3) to allow students to use alternate titles, approved by school personnel involved, or (4) to limit the educational use of the challenged material. The sole criteria for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use. The written decision and its justification shall be forwarded to the superintendent for appropriate action and to the complainant and the appropriate attendance centers.
- k. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection or use of the material.
- l. Requests to reconsider materials which have previously been before the committee must receive approval of a majority of the committee members before the materials will again be reconsidered. Every reconsideration request form shall be acted upon by the committee.
- m. In the event of a severe overload of challenges, the committee may appoint a subcommittee of members or non-members to consolidate challenges and to make recommendations to the full committee. The composition of this subcommittee shall

approximate the representation on the full committee.

- n. Committee members directly associated with the selection, use, or challenge of the challenged material shall be excused from the committee during the deliberation on such materials. The superintendent may appoint a temporary replacement for the excused committee member, but such replacement shall be of the same general qualifications of that person excused.
- o. If not satisfied with the decision, the complainant may request that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education.

From the State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
February 27, 1975

"At times persons in your school district may raise questions over appropriateness of specific instructional material. The option is always open for a parent to object to materials being used with his/her child as part of the educational program. The parent has the right to judge whether the material is acceptable for his/her child. **HOWEVER**, no parent or group of citizens of the community has a legal right to abridge the rights of other parents and teachers or children to have access to the information which is part of the educational program."

SECTION SIX - Removal of materials

Because judicious removal is as important as judicious selection, media shall be removed when:

1. it is outdated
2. it is in poor condition
3. it is no longer used in the school curriculum and no longer has value as reference material