

## Collection Development Procedures for School Libraries

### Section I: Statement:

The Jackson Public School District libraries shall be an instructional resource responsible for providing information and services to all students and staff to insure careful consideration of the selection of materials reflecting intellectual freedom and growth in a diverse society.

### Section II: Objectives of Selection:

- A. The main objective of the selection procedure is to support the instructional goals and information needs of students and staff.
- B. The objective of the library program is to make available to staff and students a collection of materials that will serve as an integral part of the curriculum and generate understanding of the American freedoms which meet the needs and interests of the students and staff served.
- C. To this end, the Jackson Public School Board (hereinafter "School Board") reaffirms the "Library Bill of Rights" of the American Library Association and asserts that the responsibility of the school library program is:

To provide a comprehensive collection of instructional materials selected in compliance with basic written selection principles, and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials;

To provide materials that will support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual's needs, and the varied interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served;

To provide materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge, and that will develop literary, cultural and aesthetic appreciation, and ethical standards;

To provide materials which reflect the ideas and beliefs of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contribution to the American and world heritage and culture, thereby enabling students to develop an intellectual integrity in forming judgments;

To provide a written statement, approved by the school board, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library media centers and provide qualified professional personnel to serve staff and students.

--Adopted by the American Association of School Librarians Board of Directors and the American Library Association, 1969

### Section III Responsibility for Selection:

- A. The School Board delegates selection of school library materials to the School Library Media Specialist in consultation with administration, faculty and when appropriate, students and parents.
- B. The Collection Development Policy for School Libraries will be evaluated for necessary changes on an as needed basis, not to exceed every five years. District librarians will be responsible for the five-year review. Building administrators, Chief Academic officers, and staff may be consulted in this process with the final approval given by the School Board/

### Section IV Criteria for Selection of Library Materials

- A. The following criteria shall be considered in the selection of library materials:
  - 1. Library materials shall support and be consistent with the educational standards and goals of the state and district and the goals and objectives at each school.
  - 2. Library materials shall be chosen with knowledge of the curriculum, the school community, its resources, and student interests.
  - 3. Library materials shall meet high standards of quality in:
    - presentation
    - physical format
    - educational significance
    - readability
    - authenticity
    - artistic quality and /or literary style
    - factual content
    - technical quality
  - 4. Library materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of students for whom the materials are selected.
  - 5. Library materials shall be designed to provide a background of information which will motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties,

responsibilities, rights and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make intelligent judgements in their daily lives.

6. Library materials shall provide information on opposing sides of controversial issues so users may develop, under guidance, the practice of critical analysis.

B. The selection of library materials on controversial issues will be directed towards maintaining a balanced collection for varying levels of difficulty, diversity of appeal and point of view.

C. Library materials shall clarify historical and contemporary forces by placing emphasis on recognizing and understanding social and economic problems.

#### Section V. Procedures for Selection of Library Materials:

A. The Library Media Specialist is given the authority to review and select library materials from favorably reviewed in one or more current or retrospective professional viewing tools.

B. Recommendations by administrators, faculty members, students, parents, and other community members will be considered.

C. Selection is an ongoing process which should include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.

#### Section VI. Rights of Students

Students have the right to access information and materials from a professionally staffed, well-supplied up-to-date school library.

Students shall not be required to read library materials, which are considered objectionable because of religious, political, or moral principles.

#### Section VII: Procedures for Dealing with Challenged Materials

Any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge library materials used in the district's school library 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.

##### I. Request for Informal Reconsideration:

- A. Challenged materials should be brought to the attention of school personnel and tried to be resolved informally.
1. The library media specialist shall explain to the person making the challenge the district's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.
  2. The library media specialist shall explain the particular place the questioned materials occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the party to the school building administrator who can identify and explain the use of the resource.
  3. If the complainant wishes to file a formal challenge, a copy of the district Selection of Library Material Policy and request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form shall be handed or mailed to the party concerned by the library media specialist or building administrator.

II. Request for Formal Reconsideration:

A. Preliminary Procedures

1. Each school will keep on hand and make available Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials forms. All formal objections to library materials must be made on these forms.
2. The Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form shall be signed by the complainant and filed with the building administrator or designee.
3. The superintendent and the deputy superintendent shall be informed of the formal complaint received.
4. The request for reconsideration shall be referred to a reconsideration committee, appointed by the deputy superintendent.

B. The Reconsideration Committee:

1. Upon receipt of a request for formal reconsideration of library material, the building administrator shall:
  - a. Appoint a reconsideration committee including the following membership as appropriate:

the school chief academic officer, lead librarian, building administrator, library media specialist, teacher, two parents, and two student representatives at the school level for reevaluation of the resource.
  - b. The committee will be co-chaired by the building administrator and the building library media specialist.
  - c. Arrange for the reconsideration committee meeting within 10 working days after the complaint is received.

2. The reconsideration committee may choose to consult district counsel with related professional knowledge.
3. The reconsideration committee shall review the challenged material and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the district's Selection of Library Materials policy.

#### D. Resolution

1. The recommendation committee shall:
  - a. Examine the challenged material
  - b. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the material
  - c. Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
  - d. Discuss the challenged material in the context of the educational program
  - e. Discuss the challenged material with the person making the complaint when appropriate
  - f. Prepare a written report
2. The committee will report the action on the complaint in writing to the superintendent or designee. The superintendent or designee will then forward the response to the person making the complaint..
3. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by school board members and appropriate officials only.
4. The decision of the reconsideration committee is binding for the individual school.
5. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this policy, the person making the complaint or any member of the committee shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee to the School board as the final review panel.

#### E. Guiding Principles

1. Any resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to library materials used in the school's library program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such resources were duly qualified to make the selection, followed the proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selecting library materials.
2. No parent has the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than his/her own children.

3. The Board supports the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the Library Bill of Rights, adopted by ALA (American Library Association), and the Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, adopted by AASL (American Association of School Librarians). Copies of these documents are attached to this policy. When library materials are challenged, the principles of the freedom to read/listen/view must be defended as well.
4. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
5. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.

#### Section VI: GIFTS OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Occasionally gifts of library materials are offered to schools. For acceptance, these materials should meet the same standards for use as do materials purchased by school district. Gift materials shall be judged by the criteria outlined and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.

SOURCES: Susquehanna Township School District Harrisburg, Pennsylvania;  
Mississippi School Library Guide – 2014 – Mississippi Department of Education;  
Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning – American Library  
Association

DATE: August 4, 2016

November 28, 2017







## Sample Letter to Complainant

Dear:

We appreciate your concern over use of \_\_\_\_\_ in our school district. The district has developed procedures for selecting materials, but realizes that not everyone will agree with every selection made.

To help you understand the selection process, we are providing you with copies of the districts:

1. Selection of Library Materials policy
2. Procedures for Dealing with Challenged Materials

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request. If I have not heard from you within two weeks, we will assume you no longer wish to file a formal complaint.

Sincerely,

Principal

## Instructions to Evaluating Committee

Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to learn and to read and base your decision on these broad principles rather than on defense of individual materials. Freedom of inquiry is vital to education in a democracy.

Study thoroughly all materials referred to you and read available reviews. The general acceptance of the materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and local holdings in other schools.

Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based on the materials as a whole.

Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the superintendent to the Complainant at the conclusion of the reconsideration process.

## Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources

The Jackson Public School District School Board has delegated the responsibility for selection of library materials to the school library media specialist and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those materials. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of school or library materials, please return the completed form to the building principal.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name or Organization \_\_\_\_\_

1. What type of material are you commenting (book, magazine, etc.)?  
Please list the following information for material(s). **If commenting on more than one item, please duplicate this sheet and complete a reconsideration request for each item.**

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date \_\_\_\_\_

2. What caused you to bring complainant against listed material?

3. Have you read the entire content of this material? This includes the entire unit, chapter, topic, or book (if fiction or biography), which includes the objectionable material.

4. What are your main concerns about this material? (Response may require additional pages, use other side of this form or additional pages)

5. Please list other materials that can provide additional information and viewpoints.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant/Organization Representative

