

Sherrard CUSD #200
Library Materials
Selection Policy

Selection of Library Materials

I. Statement of Policy/Philosophy

The policy of the School Board of the School Board of the Sherrard CUSD#200 is to provide a wide range of materials of a comprehensive nature that will enrich and support the curriculum and meet the needs of students and teachers. The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined materials policy in written form which reflects the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#). The two documents, which govern the services of all libraries, reaffirm our basic First Amendment rights.

II. Objectives of Selection

- A. To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and maturity levels of the students served;
- B. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and societal standards;
- C. To provide materials on various sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may have an opportunity to develop under guidance the practice of critical analysis and to make informed judgments in their daily lives;
- D. To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups that contribute to our national heritage and the world community;
- E. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the school community.

III. Responsibility for Selection of Learning Resources

- A. The Board delegates the responsibility for the selection of library materials to the media specialist employed by the school system.
- B. While selection of library materials involves many people including administrators, teachers, students, community persons, media center personnel, the responsibility for coordinating the selection and making the actual purchases rests with the media specialist.

IV. Criteria for Selection

- A. The following criteria will be used as they apply:
 1. Library materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the district. .
 2. Library materials shall be chosen to enrich and support the curriculum and the personal needs of users.
 3. Library materials shall meet high standards of quality in:
 - a) artistic quality and /or literary style
 - b) authenticity
 - c) educational significance
 - d) factual content

- e) physical format
 - f) presentation
 - g) readability
 - h) 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 the students for whom the materials are selected.
 5. Materials will be selected that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards.
 6. Library materials shall be designed to provide a background of information that 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 informed judgments in their daily lives.
 7. Library materials shall provide information on opposing sides of controversial issues so that users may develop under guidance the practice of critical analysis.
 8. Materials will be selected to present the sexual, racial, religious and ethnic groups in our community and our society in such a way as to build positive images, with mutual understanding and respect.
 9. The values and impact of any educational materials will be judged as a whole, taking into account the author's intent rather than individual words, phrases or incidents taken out of context.
 10. Any commercially produced film, videotape or other media productions show in a classroom must support the objectives of the grade level/subject area/course in which it is used, and must be age appropriate.

- B. The selection of library materials on controversial issues will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views. Library materials shall clarify historical and contemporary forces by presenting and analyzing intergroup tension and conflict objectively, placing emphasis on recognizing and understanding social and economic problems.

V. Procedures for Selection of Library Materials

- A. In selecting library materials, the media specialist will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, unbiased professionally prepared selection aids as well as other appropriate sources.
- B. Recommendations for purchase involve administrators, teachers, students, district personnel and community persons, as appropriate.
- C. Gift materials shall be judged by the criteria outlined and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.

1. Gifts and unsolicited materials must support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and district and the aims and objectives of the individual schools and specific courses.
 2. Gifts and unsolicited materials must meet high standards of quality in factual content, artistic and literary value, and presentation.
 3. Gifts and unsolicited materials must be current and up- to- date, or useful because of their historical value.
 4. Gifts and unsolicited materials must be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of students for whom materials are selected.
 5. Physical format and appearance of gifts and unsolicited materials must be suitable for their intended use.
 6. If a gift is not deemed suitable for the collection, it may be used in a book exchange, or as a prize for a student, or given to a teacher in the district.
- D. Selection is an ongoing process and as such, materials which no longer meet the stated objectives of the library or the needs of the users will be [discarded](#) according to accepted professional practices. Disposition of library materials will be at the discretion of the media specialist in consultation with the administration. This includes the removal of materials that are out - of - date, no longer appropriate to the curriculum or to student interests. This also includes the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.

Part 2: Procedures for Dealing with Challenged Materials

I. Statement of Policy

While materials were selected by qualified personnel following the prescribed procedures established by the school board, any resident or employee of the school district may formally challenge materials used in the district's educational program.

II. Request for Informal Reconsideration

- A. The school receiving a complaint regarding materials shall try to resolve the issue informally.
 1. The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain to the complainant the district's selection procedure, criteria, and qualification of those persons selecting the resource as needed.
 2. The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the education program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use; or refer the party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the resource.
 3. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant shall be supplied with a packet of materials consisting of the district's instructional goals and objectives, Library Selection Policy, and the

procedure for handling the objection. The packet will also include the Request for Reconsideration Materials form which shall be completed and returned before consideration will be given to the complaint.

4. If the principal has not received the formal request for reconsideration within two weeks, the matter shall be considered closed. If the request is returned, the appropriate staff shall re-establish the reasons for the selection of the specific work.

III. Request for Formal Reconsideration

A. Preliminary Procedures

1. Each school will keep on hand, and make available, Request for Reconsideration of Materials forms. All formal objections to district materials must be made on these forms.
2. The Request for Reconsideration of Materials form must be filled out completely, signed by the complainant and filed with the principal or someone so designated by the principal.
3. The building principal will file the request immediately with the Superintendent. The media specialist shall be informed that a formal complaint has been received.
4. The Request for Reconsideration Form shall be referred to a reconsideration committee for reevaluation of the resource.
5. In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child or children of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

B. The Reconsideration Committee

1. Upon receipt of the Request for Reconsideration of Materials form, the superintendent shall appoint a reconsideration committee consisting of five/seven members: one district teacher, one district principal, district media specialist, one Board member, one/two citizen(s), one/two high school students(s).
2. The committee shall meet within 10 working days after the complaint has been received, for the opportunity to clarify and expand upon their formal reconsideration following the guidelines set forth in the Instructions to the Reconsideration Committee, and shall prepare a report on the material containing their recommendation on disposition of the matter.
3. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by the board and appropriate officials only.
4. The decision of the reconsideration committee is binding for the board.

C. Appeal Procedure

1. The complainant/questioner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee to the Board as the final review panel under the following conditions:

- a) the individual attended the reconsideration committee meeting when attendance was requested by the committee; and
 - b) the appeal must be received by the Superintendent within 30 days of the committee's decision.
2. When a complainant meets the considerations required for appeal, the board will conduct a hearing. Notice of the time and place of hearing will be provided in writing to the complainant and the Reconsideration Committee. After the hearing, the Board will communicate its decision to the complainant and the Reconsideration Committee.

D. Guiding Principles

1. Any resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to learning resources used in a school's educational 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 learning resources.
2. No parent has the right to determine reading, viewing or listening matter for students other than his or her own children.
3. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
4. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
5. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgement of irresponsibility by the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

IV. Reconsideration of Educational Materials Form

Instructions to the Reconsideration Committee

1. Choose a chair of the committee.
2. Choose a recorder.

Guidelines:

1. The reconsideration committee may choose to consult district support staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge.
2. The reconsideration committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the district's Selection Policy.
3. 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.
4. Study thoroughly all materials referred to you and read available reviews. The general acceptance of the materials shall be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids.
5. Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based upon the materials as a whole.

Resolution

1. The reconsideration committee shall:
 - a. Read the Reconsideration Form that was filed;
 - b. Examine the challenged resource;
 - c. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resource;
 - d. Weight values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context;
 - e. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program;
 - f. Discuss the challenged item with the individual questionnaire;
 - g. the committee will decide on one of the following:
 - i. retain the material for general staff and student use
 - ii. make the material generally available upon request
 - iii. limit use to staff only
 - iv. limit the educational use of the material to specific classroom use or to specific building(s)
 - v. remove the material from the total school environment
 - h. Prepare a written decision and its justification to the Superintendent who will notify the complainant and the board of the committee's decision and reasons for its action. A minority report also may be filed.

**This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000. by the ALA Council and AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Part 3: [Reconsideration of Educational Materials Form](#)