

INSTRUCTIONAL AND LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION

Objectives of Selection

The School Committee recognizes that it is the primary objective of the library media centers and the instructional program in our schools to implement, enrich and support the educational programs of the schools. In preparing students to meet the content standards of the Learning Results, in supporting the achievement of the Windham School Department's educational goals and objectives, and in providing enrichment opportunities that expand students' interests and contribute to a desire for lifelong learning, it is the duty of the library media centers and the instructional program to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal, and the presentation of different points of view.

To this end, the School Committee asserts that the responsibility of the School Library Media Center and the instructional program is:

- A. Support achievement of the content standards of the Learning Results;
- B. Support the goals and objectives of the Windham School Department's educational programs;
- C. To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served;
- D. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards;
- E. To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues to enable students to develop a capability for critical analysis;
- F. To foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and various opinions by providing materials representative of the many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage; and
- G. To provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives;
- H. Respect the constraints of the Windham School Department budget.

In addition, the School Committee recognizes that the final authority as to what materials an individual student will be exposed to rests with that student's parents or guardians. However, at no time will the wishes of one child's parents to restrict his/her reading or viewing of a particular item infringe on other parents' rights to permit their children to read or view the same material.

Library-media center materials will not be removed from the collection because of criticism except in accordance with Board policy.

Responsibility for Selection of Instructional and Library Materials

The School Committee is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the schools. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professional trained personnel employed by the School Committee.

Selection of materials for the library media centers and the instructional program involves many people: principals, teachers, department heads, students and community members. The responsibility for the coordination of the selection of library and instructional materials and the recommendation for purchase rests with professionally trained personnel. The School Committee is responsible to approve a uniform system of textbooks.

Criteria for Selection

The needs of the individual school, based on knowledge of the curriculum and of the existing collection, are given first consideration.

Materials for purchase are considered on the following basis: overall purpose, timeliness or permanence, importance of the subject matter, quality of the writing/production, readability and popular appeal, authoritativeness, reputation of the publisher/producer, reputation and significance of the author/artist/composer/producer, etc., and format and price.

In evaluating software, multimedia materials and online/Internet resources, additional factors that should be considered include purpose for use; content; format (degree of interactivity or student involvement); appropriate use of graphics, sound and animation; feedback provided; and ease of use.

Gift materials are judged by the same standards and are accepted or rejected by those standards.

Procedures for Selection

Meeting the needs of the individual schools, based on knowledge of the curriculum and the existing collections of instructional and library-media materials, shall be the highest priority. Basic learning materials, i.e., those that are the predominant instructional materials used by most members of the class, are used for a significant portion of the course or receive major emphasis during a course, or are essential to student achievement of content standards of the Learning Results are to take priority in the selection process.

In selecting the materials for purchase, the professional personnel evaluate the existing collection, consulting reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and specialists from all departments and/or all grade levels.

Textbooks should not be older than five years unless up-to-date supplemental instructional materials are also available.

Whenever possible, purchase of non-print materials shall be done only after personal evaluation by the librarian/media specialist and/or other appropriate staff. Reviewing aids may be used in lieu of personal evaluation.

Summary

Books and materials meeting the above standards and principles will not be banned, but books or materials of an obscene nature or those advocating overthrow of the government of the United States by force or revolution shall not be recommended for purchase.

Challenged Materials

Despite the care taken to select materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of the persons who select the materials, it is recognized that occasional objections may be raised by community members, parents, students, or school staff.

In the event a complaint is made, the following procedures will apply:

- A. The complaint shall be heard first by the person providing the materials in question.
- B. If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant shall be referred to the building Principal and requested to fill out the "Citizen's Challenge to Educational Media" form. A copy of the form will be forwarded to the Superintendent.
- C. The Superintendent shall appoint a committee composed of the following persons to review the complaint. One Principal at the appropriate grade level; one librarian/media specialist; one classroom teacher; the department head in the subject area of the challenged materials; two community members.
- D. The review committee shall: read and examine the materials referred to them; check general acceptance of materials by reading reviews; weigh values and faults against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages or portions pulled out of context; meet to discuss the material and to prepare a written report in a timely manner.
- E. The report of the committee shall be forwarded to the Superintendent who will inform the complainant of the results.
- F. No materials shall be removed from use until the review committee has made a final decision.
- G. The review committee's decision may be appealed to the Board. The Board may set aside a portion of a regular meeting or call a special meeting for the purpose of receiving testimony from representatives of the various points of view. The material in question shall be:
 - 1. Reviewed objectively and in its full content;
 - 2. Evaluated in terms of the needs and interest of students, school, curriculum and community;
 - 3. Considered in the light of differing opinions; and
 - 4. Reviewed in light of the criteria for initial selection and purpose as provided herein

The School Committee will announce its decision in writing not later than the conclusion of the next regular meeting of the Board following its receipt of said testimony.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 1001 (10-A), 1055 (4), 4002
CH. 125 §§ 9.01, 9.03 (Maine Department of Education Rule)
P.L. 107-110 § 1061 (No Child Left Behind Act)

Cross-Reference: IJJ-E – Citizen’s Challenge of Educational Media Form

Adopted: June 12, 2002

AMENDED: First Reading – August 16, 2006

AMENDED: Second Reading – November 15, 2006

Citizen's Challenge of Educational Media Form

Type of Material: _____ Book _____ Magazine/Periodical _____ Film _____ Recording
_____ Software _____ Other (Please Specify): _____

Author (if known): _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known): _____

Person making complaint: _____ Phone _____

Street Address _____ Town _____

Complainant represents: _____ Him/herself _____ Organization: _____
_____ Other (please specify): _____

1. To what portion of the material do you object? (Please be specific – cite pages, scenes, etc.) _____

2. What do you feel might be the negative result of reading/viewing/hearing this material? _____

3. For what age group would you recommend this material? _____

4. Is there anything good about this material? _____

5. Did you read/view/hear all of the material? _____ If not, what parts did you read/view/hear? _____

6. Are you aware of the professional reviews/judgment of this material? _____

7. What do you believe is the theme and/or intention of this material? _____

8. What would you like the school to do about this material?
_____ Do not assign it to my child.
_____ Do not assign it to any students.
_____ Withdraw it from the library and/or instructional program.
_____ Refer it to the Educational Media Review Committee for evaluation.

9. In its place, what material would you recommend? _____

Signature of Complainant

Date