

6161.1 (R).

Procedures for Library/Media Materials Selection and Re-evaluation 6161.1(R)

Introduction

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement, enrich and support the educational program of the school. The library/media center is intended to provide the school with 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 Meriden Board of Education subscribes in principle to the statements on library philosophy as expressed by the American Association of School Librarians in the "School Library Bill of Rights":

1. To provide a comprehensive collection of instructional materials selected in compliance with basic written selection procedures, and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials.
2. To provide materials that will support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual's needs, and the varied interests, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served.
3. To provide materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge and literary, cultural and aesthetic appreciation, and ethical standards.
4. 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.
5. To provide a written statement, approved by the Board of Education, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library/media centers.
6. To provide qualified professional personnel to serve teachers and students.

Criteria for Library/Media Materials Selection

The library/media collection shall contain materials that are consistent with the criteria listed below. With regard to what might be considered as controversial issues, a balanced presentation of such matters shall be contained within individual works or within a specified group of books or media that meet other relevant criteria for selection.

1. Materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the Meriden Public Schools and its curricula.
2. Materials shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
3. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
4. Materials shall support the development of reading skills and aid instruction in the use of books and library/media centers.
5. Materials shall have aesthetic, literary, artistic and/or social value of recognized significance.
6. Materials chosen shall be by competent and qualified authors and producers.

7. Materials shall be chosen to foster respect and understanding of minority groups, women, ethnic groups and religions and shall realistically and factually represent our pluralistic contemporary society along with the roles and lifestyles open to both men and women.
8. Materials shall be chosen that examine economic, political and ideological systems and the historical impact of such systems.
9. Materials shall provide students with opportunities and experiences which foster critical thinking in an atmosphere of free inquiry.
10. Materials shall present the varied aspects of our society, including some that may be considered undesirable.
11. Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.
12. Physical format and appearance of materials shall be of high quality and be appropriate for their intended use.
13. Materials shall be chosen to foster leisure and recreational reading in order to encourage and develop lifelong reading habits.
14. Materials are also to be considered on the basis of:

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.

format and price

requests from faculty and students.

Library/Media Materials Selection Procedures

1. The Board of Education is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the Meriden Public Schools.
2. The responsibility for the selection of library/media materials shall reside primarily with professionally trained and certified personnel subject to criteria approved by the Board of Education and subject to Board review. For the purposes of this provision, the terms "library/media materials" or "materials" include printed and audiovisual materials (e.g. books, magazines, films, video tapes, filmstrips, records, audio tapes, etc.) housed in the school library/media center or the system wide Library/Media Center.
3. The selection of materials involves many people: principals, supervisors, teachers and

library/media specialists. The responsibility for coordinating and selection of purchase rests with the professionally trained and certified library/media personnel.

4. In selecting materials for purchase, the library/media specialist or Supervisor of Library/Media Services evaluates the existing collection and:
5. consults reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids;
6. consults staff from departments and/or all grade levels; and
7. in the case of the school library/media specialist, submits recommended selections for review by the school principal.

Part II: Re-evaluation of Library/Media Materials

Introduction

Occasional objections to a selection will be made by the public despite the care taken to select valuable materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of persons who select the materials.

Community members are reminded that, while they have the right to guide or limit their children in what they read or view, they may not do so by limiting the range of materials available to other children. In particular, materials that parents or guardians of current students judge to be inappropriate for their children should be returned to the school library/media center.

Procedures for the Re-evaluation of Library/Media Materials

The following procedures shall be followed whenever there is a request for the re-evaluation of library/media materials whether the materials are assigned to a school library/media center or had been obtained through the system wide Library/Media Center.

1. All complaints to staff members shall be reported to the building principal, Supervisor of Library/Media Services and the library/media specialist involved, whether received by telephone, letter or in personal conversation.
2. The principal, Supervisor of Library/Media Services or the library/media specialist shall contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve it informally.
3. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the principal or Supervisor of Library/Media Services will provide the complainant with a Request for Re-evaluation of Library/Media Materials form plus copies of reviews of the material in question (when available). The principal or Supervisor of Library/Media Services will inform the Superintendent of what has transpired.
4. When completed, the form is to be returned to the building principal or Supervisor of Library/Media Services who will forward a copy to the library/media specialist. The completed form and material in question will be reviewed by a Building Library/Media Advisory Council to be appointed by the school principal which will include teachers, an administrator and when appropriate, student representative(s). A report of the council's review will be sent to the person requesting re-evaluation, the school principal and the Supervisor of Library/Media Services.

5. If the person requesting re-evaluation is not satisfied, a written request may be made to the Superintendent of Schools for further consideration. This request must include a copy of the completed request form and the Building Library/Media Advisory Council's reply, and should indicate the area(s) of dissatisfaction.
6. The Superintendent shall establish an ad hoc review committee to include:
 7. teachers competent in the area of content covered by the print or non-print materials;
 8. administrators and supervisors appropriate to the level and/or subject for which the material is used; and
 9. a library/media specialist.
10. The Superintendent's action on a written request shall be taken no later than fifteen (15) school days after receipt of the request. The person making the request is to be notified of the date of the review at least seven (7) days in advance.
11. The requesting person may make an oral presentation of fifteen minutes or less to the review committee, if scheduled through the Superintendent's office at least three (3) days before the review.
12. A written report from the review committee shall be submitted to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall then communicate his/her decision to the person requesting the re-evaluation.
13. Should the decision of the Superintendent not satisfy the person requesting the re-evaluation, the Board will review the Superintendent's decision within fifteen (15) days of receipt of a written request by the complainant to carry out such a review. The Board's written response will be rendered within three (3) days of its review.
14. Once library/media material has been re-evaluated, the material cannot be subject to further review without special approval by the Board. Challenged library/media materials shall remain in use pending final decision in the matter.

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