

Medway Public School
Medway, MA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY

Policy #25

Material Selection Policy For School Library Media Centers

I. PHILOSOPHY

In our increasingly complex and technology-oriented world, education is no longer simply the acquisition of a body of knowledge. It is, rather, the ability to continually process and use a vast array of information sources. The student must be able to effectively collect, evaluate, interpret and use this information in order to become a successfully educated individual. Hence, this mode of learning becomes a lifelong habit. Because knowledge acquired today may be inadequate tomorrow, the process of searching out answers will be a lifetime skill.

The School Library Media Center and its programs are essential to the educational process, providing access to a collection of skillfully selected, organized, and managed resources. With these information resources, the School Library Media Center serves as a major channel through which the changing body of knowledge flows, thus providing all members of the school community with the broadest possible range of information and ideas. In addition, the School Library Media Center will provide materials that support and enrich the curriculum as well as the literary, historical and cultural heritage and to promote a love of reading and encourage the appreciation of fine literature.

II. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTING MATERIALS

The Medway School Committee is responsible for the policy of the Medway Public Schools. The responsibility for the selection of materials is delegated to the professionally trained personnel who know the courses of study, the methods of teaching, and the individual differences of the students. This personnel includes the Unified Media Specialist in consultation with other media specialists, administrators, teachers, and students. The responsibility for coordinating the selection and purchase of materials rests with the Unified Media Specialist.

III. OBJECTIVES FOR SELECTING MATERIALS

The prime objective of the School Library Media Center's program is to enrich and support the instructional program of the school. The School Library Media Center makes available a wide range of materials on varying levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal compatible with the different needs, interests, and viewpoints of students and teachers.

To this end, the Medway School Committee, in keeping with the ideas expressed in the school Library Bill of Rights, asserts that the responsibility of the School Library Media program is as follows:

To provide material that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual needs and the varied interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served. To provide materials that stimulate the growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

To provide information resources enabling students to develop the skill of information gathering and practice critical thinking and analysis.

To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups in our nation and the contribution of these groups to our heritage. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in selecting materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the School Library Media Center.

IV. CRITERIA FOR SELECTING MATERIALS FOR THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

Consideration is given first to the curriculum, the existing collection and individual learning styles in determining the needs for the School Library Media Center. Materials considered for purchase are judged on the basis of the following criteria:

Purpose:	Overall purpose and its direct relationship to instructional objectives and/or the curriculum.
Reliability:	Accurate, authentic, timely factual content.
Quality:	Writing and/or production of merit.
Treatment:	Clear, comprehensible, skillful, convincing, well-organized, balanced, unbiased.
Technical Production:	Audio and/or visual clear and well-crafted.
Construction:	Durable, manageable, attractive.
Features:	Complete index, useful illustrations, photographs, maps, charts, and other graphical inclusions.
Uses:	Curriculum support and/or enhancement, independent study and investigation, pleasure reading, literary appreciation, aesthetic value.

V. PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING AND MAINTAINING MATERIALS

In coordinating the process of selecting and maintaining materials, the Unified Media Specialist will:

1. Arrange, when possible, for firsthand examination of items to be purchased.
2. Use reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aides when firsthand examination of materials is not possible.
3. Purchase duplicates of extensively used materials and replacements for worn, damaged or missing materials basic to the collection.
4. Weed continuously from the collection worn, obsolete and inoperable items.
5. Evaluate carefully and purchase only to fill a specific need expensive sets of materials and items procured by subscription.

VI. STATEMENT OF GIFTS

The School Library Media Center welcomes materials from individuals and organizations but reserves the right to refuse unsuitable materials. All materials, to be acceptable, must meet the same high standards and criteria established for the selection of all materials used in the School Library Media Center.

The appraisal of a gift to the school library Media Center for tax purposes is the responsibility of the donor. The School Library Media Center, because it is an interested party, may not appraise the gifts made to it.

VII. PROCEDURES FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

1. Occasional objections to some materials may be voiced despite the care taken in the selection process. If a complaint is made, the following procedure will be followed:
2. Inform the complainant of the selection procedures and make no commitments.
3. Invite the complainant to file his/her objections in writing, using the form, "Request for the Reconsideration of School Library Media Materials" (attached). This form will be sent to the Building Principal.
4. A duplicate copy of the completed form will be sent to the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent, acting for the School Committee, will appoint a committee to re-evaluate the material being questioned and make recommendations concerning the material.

6. The committee will consist of the Building Principal, the Unified Media Specialist, one teacher in the subject field/grade level of the questioned material, and two community members.
7. The review of questioned materials shall be treated objectively, weighing the merits of the questioned material as a whole and not on the passages or parts pulled out of context.

Every opportunity shall be afforded those persons or groups questioning School Library Media Center materials to meet with the committee and to present their opinions.

The findings and recommendations of the committee will be submitted to the Superintendent for presentation and recommendation to the School Committee for its approval. The committee's report will also be sent to the complainant.

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