



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

Board Policy Statement

6161.11 - Materials Selection Policy for the New Britain Public Schools Libraries and Media Centers

Approved on March 10, 2006

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide, within the allocated budget, a wide range of instructional materials for all levels of difficulty with diversity of appeal, and reflecting different points of view in order to enable school library and media centers to implement, enrich and support each schools' educational program.



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

Administrative Procedure

6161.11 - Materials Selection Policy for the New Britain Public Schools Libraries and Media Centers

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I. Responsibility for Selection of Materials

The New Britain Board of Education is legally responsible for all materials relating to the operation of New Britain's Public Schools. The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school system as supervised by the building principal. Selection of materials involves many people: principals, teachers, coordinators and media specialists. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of instructional materials and making the recommendation for purchase rests with the professionally trained media personnel

II. Criteria for Selection of Instructional Materials

Needs of the individual school based on knowledge of curriculum and of the existing collection are given first consideration. Materials for purchase are considered on the basis of:

- Overall purpose
- Timeliness or permanence
- 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

In general, the standards which should be applied to materials are as follows:

- A. The author or person responsible for the work should have the qualifications (education, experience, etc.) that make him/her fit to deal authoritatively with subjects of interest to the students.
- B. The scope of the work should be such that when the work is compared with materials already in the collection, it will be judged to have the ability to make a positive contribution to that collection.
- C. The material should be presented in a clear, organized, interesting and accurate manner; and not truths should be manipulated so as to more convincingly present a particular point of view.
- D. The content of the material selected should be suitable in relation to the age level for which it is intended.

- E. The material selected should have no physical or mechanical defects.
- F. The material selected should be suited to the interests, needs and abilities of the students who attend the particular schools involved and not necessarily to those students who attend any other schools or to a statistical abstraction known as the “average” child.

III. Guidelines For Use Of Videos In The Classroom

Since class time for teaching and learning is limited, and since active rather than passive modes of instruction are more beneficial to students, videos (including feature length movies and filmstrips) are to be used both appropriately and sparingly. The following guidelines have been established to govern the use of videos in the New Britain School District:

- A. A video is never to replace direct skills development with students as called for in the various subject areas.
- B. Video content must always be of recognized merit and relate directly to the curriculum.
- C. When the video represents a written work, students generally must read the printed version of the material before viewing the video.
- D. Teachers must preview all videos before showing them to their students and note specific learning outcomes expected from the viewing as objectives in their weekly lesson plans.
- E. Students must respond critically to the presentation after viewing.
- F. Video viewing time, on the average, is not to exceed the following limits:
 - a. Elementary - no more than three (3) hours per month, including both classroom and special subject experiences.
 - b. Secondary - no more than two (2) periods per month per subject. Exceptions to these limits include approved videos which may require more than two class periods to show and which cannot be easily abridged, and foreign language classes in which brief video segments in the language are part of the lesson. Any other exceptions require written approval by the building principal.
- G. In general, excerpts from particular videos are most effective in supporting instruction. Only full-length feature movie videos which directly enhance the school curriculum may be used in the classroom in keeping with the following requirements:
- H. Generally only G-rated movie videos may be used at the elementary level. Selected PG movie videos may be used in grades 4 and 5 with the written approval of the principal.
- I. Only PG or PG-13 rated movie videos may be used at the middle school level.
- J. PG and PG-13 rated movie videos may be used at the high school.
- K. R-rated movie videos may be used at the high school level only if they are of exceptional merit, enhance the curriculum and are approved, in writing, by the principal. The R-rated videos must not contain

excessive profanity or nudity or explicit violence or sex. If an R-rated movie is being used, parents must be notified of its nature and possible offensive content and must give permission for their child, if under age 18, to view it. A student can opt not to view the video even if parental approval is given. If a student does not participate in viewing the video, an alternate assignment and location for the student should be provided.

- L. These rating requirements also apply when staff members are considering a field trip to the movies for classes or extracurricular groups of students.

The Procedure on Controversial Materials

- A. The Library Media Center will make every effort to provide materials on both sides of relevant controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking. Materials dealing with controversial subjects will be included in the collection as long as they meet the standards for inclusion as outlined earlier.
- B. 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 qualification of person who select the materials.
- C. The principles of the freedom to read and of the professional responsibility of the staff must be defended rather than the materials.
- D. If a complaint is made, the procedures are as follows:
 - a. Any complaint made to a media specialist or other staff member, verbally or in writing, shall be reported to the building principal.
 - b. The building principal shall in turn report the complaint to the Director of Instruction.
 - c. The Director of Instruction shall contact the complainant in an attempt to resolve the complaint informally.
 - d. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Director of Instruction shall 1) notify the Superintendent of the impending complaint; 2) provide the complainant with a copy of this policy; and 3) provide the complainant with the form "Request for Re-evaluation of Library/Media Materials." (See attached.)
 - e. If the completed form is not returned to the Director of Instruction within a two-week period, the complaint will be considered closed although any complaint may be reopened. If the form is returned within the designated time period, the Director of Instruction shall notify the Superintendent who will convene the Media Evaluation Committee.
 - f. The Media Evaluation Committee shall be composed of the school library/media specialists, the Director of Instruction, the principal of the building involved, the Superintendent or his/her designee, and anyone else appointed to serve by the Superintendent. The committee shall:
 - I. Read and examine the material referred to it.
 - II. Check general acceptance of the material by reading reviews.

- III. Weigh values and faults against each other and not on passages pulled out of context.
Meet to discuss the material and to prepare a report on it.
- IV. File a copy of the report in the school and administrative offices.
- V. Arrive at a decision concerning the material in question based on the findings discovered through the above study. Such opinion shall be conveyed to the Superintendent who will report to the Board of Education. Regarding this process, the decision of the Board of Education shall be final.

Appendix A – Request for re-evaluation of library/media materials

Print Items

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Date of Publication _____

Non-Print Items

Title _____

Producer _____

Type of Material _____

Request Initiated By _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Address _____

City _____ School _____

Person making request represents:

_____ (Individual)

_____ (Group or Organization)

To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific – cite pages, etc)

In your opinion, what harmful effects upon pupils might result from the use of this material?

Did you review or examine the material in its entirety? If not, what selections?

Should the opinion of any additional experts in the field be considered? If so, please provide names and addresses.

In place of this material, would you care to recommend other material which you consider to be of superior quality?

What would you like the school to do about this material? Please check one or comment for other

- Withdraw from all students
- Send it back to the media committee for re-evaluation
- Other _____

_____ Date

_____ Signature