

Central School District Instructional and Library Materials Selection

A. Overview of Selection

The Board recognizes that it is the primary objective of the instructional program and the library media centers to implement, enrich, and support teaching and learning, and the education programs in our schools. By accessing a wide range of materials at all levels of difficulty which offer a diversity of appeal and presentation of different points of view, our students will expand their knowledge and hone their skills.

The Central School District supports the free exchange of ideas as a vital element of our democracy and in our public schools. Access to instructional and library media materials that foster critical thinking and respectful civil discourse are important to our students as they prepare to be responsible and involved citizens in our democracy.

To assist with the selection of materials, the Board endorses the Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association. The Library Bill of Rights asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop with guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
5. Provide materials which are representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. 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 for the users of the library.

While the Board retains its authority to approve the selection of instructional materials, it recognizes the educational expertise of its professional staff and the need for staff to be involved in the recommendation of instructional materials. The Board delegates responsibility for the selection of instructional materials and library-media resources to the professionally trained personnel employed by the District, subject to the criteria and procedures for selection and the Board policy on challenged materials

Further, The Board recognizes the authority of the State of _____ to establish guidelines for the district curriculum and standards. The Central School District commits to following all applicable state laws and rules.

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

B. Definitions

“Instructional materials” include textbooks and other print materials, software and other electronic materials, online/Internet resources (including access), and supplies and other materials to support instruction. “Library-media resources” include books, print materials, online/Internet resources (including access), multimedia materials and information technology that, as part of the library media program, support the District’s curriculum.

C. Criteria for Selection

Selection of materials by library media personnel and teachers is based upon their knowledge of the curriculum and the existing collection. The primary goal is the support of the educational program. A secondary goal is the provision of materials for personal interests of students. Library media personnel work toward providing a collection which is balanced in all areas.

The needs of the individual school, based on staff knowledge of the curriculum and of the existing collection, are given first consideration. Materials selected should:

1. Present balanced, fact-based views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present, and future.
2. Provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. Help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity in the United States and throughout the world.
5. Provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, physical disabilities, gender identity or sexual preference.
6. Support achievement of the state content standards.
7. Support the goals and objectives of the District’s educational programs and enrich and support the curriculum.
8. Take into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
9. Present a balance of opposing sides of controversial issues to enable students to develop a capability for critical analysis.
10. Foster respect and appreciation for diversity and varied opinions.
11. Give comprehensive, accurate, and balanced representation to people of color and women in history, science, leadership, and the arts, and acknowledge the contributions of ethnic, religious, and cultural groups.
12. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make informed decisions in their daily lives.
13. Respect the constraints of the school’s budget.

D. Procedures for Selection

In selecting the materials for acquisition, the professional personnel evaluate the existing collection, consulting reputable, unbiased, and professionally prepared selection aids and specialists from all departments and/or all grade levels. 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. The Superintendent shall recommend textbooks, supplies, and other instructional aids with the approval of the Board and shall make all these purchases under rules adopted by the Board.

E. Challenged Materials

Despite the care taken to select materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of the persons who select the materials, the District recognizes that occasional objections may be raised by students, parents/guardians, employees, or residents of the District. Challenges from individuals not in one of those identified groups will not be considered. In the event a complaint is made, the following procedures will apply:

1. The complainant shall fill out the "Citizen's Challenge to Educational Media" form (Challenge Form) and address their concerns to the person providing the materials in question.
2. If the complaint is not resolved, the staff member shall transfer the Challenge to the Principal and refer the complainant to them. The Principal will review policy IJJ and the Challenge with the complainant. A copy of the complaint will be forwarded to the Superintendent.
3. If the complaint is still not resolved, the Superintendent shall appoint an Education Review Committee composed of the following persons to review the complaint: one building administrator; one librarian/media specialist; one classroom teacher; the department head in the subject area of the challenged materials; and one community member. The members of the review committee will be anonymous to protect the objectivity of the deliberation. The review committee meeting will be closed to the public, and the committee's discussions will be confidential. Comments from residents of the District related to the complaint should be directed to the Superintendent and will be relayed to the members of the committee.
4. The review committee shall: read and examine the materials referred to them, including the completed complaint; 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 on it. The report will present both majority and minority (if present) opinions and will make a recommendation to either retain the material in its original location, to relocate the material, or to remove the material. The review committee's recommendation is intended to be an objective evaluation of the material within the scope of the District's relevant selection and adoption policies.
5. The report of the committee shall be forwarded to the Superintendent who will inform the complainant of the results. No materials shall be removed from use until the review committee has made a final decision.
6. 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 issue will be decided by the full Board and not a sub-committee. The material in question shall be:
 - a. Reviewed objectively and in its full content;
 - b. Evaluated in terms of the needs and interests of students, the school, the curriculum and the community;
 - c. Considered in the light of differing opinions; and
 - d. Reviewed in light of the criteria for initial selection and purpose as provided herein. The Board 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 References

See state specific statutory language.

Cross References

AD, Educational Philosophy

IJJ-E, Citizen's Challenge of Educational Media Form

IMB, Learning and Teaching About Controversial Issues

Approved: 00/00/0000

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