

361.1 RULE

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION AND EVALUATION

I. Definitions

Educational materials - the general term used to refer to all print and non-print materials or resources which are used as a part of the educational program of the School District. Throughout this policy, the term “materials” shall be used to mean educational materials.

Textbooks - the book or set of materials which serves as the foundation for more than fifty percent of the content of any Board-approved course. In Wisconsin, textbooks must be formally adopted by the Board of Education.

Supplementary materials - books or other non-print materials used within the context of the instructional program which are not included in the definitions of textbooks or instructional materials listed above. Other resources used by the school system in its educational program such as field trips, resource persons, speakers, or dramatic events, are not within the scope of this policy.

Library materials - those materials that are acquired by and circulated from the Library for student or teacher use.

II. Procedures for Selection of Educational Materials and Textbooks

1. Textbook selection and adoption shall be included as part of the formal cycle for curriculum adoption, evaluation, and improvement in the District. Subject area textbooks (or the analogous core instructional material that is used in lieu of a formal textbook) shall be reviewed by a textbook selection committee appointed by the District Administrator prior to being recommended for selection, adoption, and use in the District.
2. The textbook selection committee shall keep in mind the general selection criteria outlined in Board policy and shall abide by the following procedures:
 - a. A readability analysis will be completed on all textbooks that are to be considered for adoption in the District. The readability analysis shall be chosen and/or approved by the District Administrator or designee.
 - b. Textbooks will be evaluated relative to the District’s established curriculum objectives for their coverage of essential content-based and skills-based goals and standards and for the instructional and assessment methodologies that have been adopted or that are encouraged by the authors/publishers. Consider questions such as the following: Do the objectives of the text closely match the District’s curricular expectations? Does the textbook accurately reflect the learner expectations of the District’s curriculum? Does the textbook encourage higher level thinking skills and application of the content and skills to real life experiences? Has the textbook been shown to be effective in other situations?

- c. Textbooks will be checked for bias, misinformation, and stereotyping. Textbooks should be selected that reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of America's society and provide up-to-date and accurate information.
 - d. It is the legal responsibility of the District to provide instructional materials and resources that will enable students with special needs to obtain the educational opportunities and benefits in a manner that is as timely, effective, and integrated as it is for other District students. Accordingly, the textbook selection committee will check with appropriate sources (i.e., Wisconsin Accessible Media Productions or Bookshare) whether the textbook is available (or can be made available) in alternative formats to meet the needs of students with disabilities and other students who may require special formats (e.g., English Learners).
 - e. Textbooks that are deemed acceptable relative to the criteria listed immediately above will be further screened by the committee members to review the following: The utility of the teacher's manual for the textbook and other supplementary materials;
 - The physical structure and layout of the materials and, if applicable, the continuity within any series;
 - Writing style;
 - Date of publication; and
 - Recommendations from other schools and any available studies or data regarding student outcomes
 - in other schools.
3. The textbook selection committee shall make a recommendation for adoption of a textbook(s) and related textbook materials to the District Administrator. The recommendation shall include a general written analysis of the available material given consideration and the basis for the recommendation. The District Administrator shall review the committee report and transmit acceptable recommendations to the School Board for review and action.
 4. Upon adoption by the Board, the textbook selections shall be included in the revised curriculum guide for the subject area and added to a list of adopted textbooks that shall be maintained in the District Office on behalf of the Board Clerk.
 5. After textbooks and other related textbook materials are adopted by the Board, the District Administrator or designee will notify appropriate staff of the textbook adoption and provide for the purchasing and implementation of the textbooks in the District's curriculum. The District Administrator or designee will also arrange appropriate training for staff to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum and associated teaching strategies.
 6. In general, textbooks will be reevaluated as part of the curriculum revision cycle. There may, however, be times that textbooks will need to be reevaluated outside of the curriculum revision cycle.

III. Procedures for Selection and Removal of School Library Media Center Materials

The professionally trained Library Media Specialist employed by the Williams Bay School District is responsible to the Board of Education for the selection of library materials.

- In selecting materials and information for purchase for the school library media center, the school librarian will evaluate the existing collection and the curriculum needs, readability, and popular appeal of materials, and consult with reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate sources.
- Recommendations for purchase will be solicited from faculty and the student body. Recommendations from parents and community members will also be considered. Such recommendations will be seriously considered but are not binding on the library media specialists.
- Materials and information offered as gifts shall be evaluated by the same criteria as selected materials and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria. Such materials will not be accepted if subject to restrictions on use or disposal or if they would produce an imbalance the library cannot afford to redress.
- Selection is an ongoing process. It shall include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value. This process shall be guided by the publication “CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries” and method described within the document.
- Selections shall be forwarded to the designated business or administrative office for purchase throughout the year.
- The following list may be, but is not limited to, guiding removal in connection with routine maintenance (weeding) of the district’s library collections under the direction and supervision of the district librarian (see CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries for complete weeding process):
 - materials that are excessively worn/damaged;
 - materials that are obsolete (such as outdated or superseded editions);
 - materials that are unnecessarily duplicative of other resources (such as excess copies of a book no longer in significant demand);
 - materials that are unused for lengthy periods of time and that have minimal current educational value; and
 - materials that are negatively affecting either the usability of the library or efficiency of library operations.

IV. Selection and Use of Supplementary Instructional Materials and Resources in the Classroom

1. It is generally the responsibility of the classroom teacher, in consultation with other instructional staff as appropriate, to review and select supplementary instructional materials and resources for use in the classroom. Supplementary materials and

resources are primarily used by a teacher to enhance instruction, or by particular students to meet specific needs. All recommendations for the purchasing of supplementary instructional materials shall be submitted to the building principal with a supporting rationale and for approval under established District purchasing procedures. Even where no purchase is required, all teachers are strongly encouraged to review their selection of supplementary instructional materials with their building principal or Director prior to actual use as each teacher will ultimately be accountable for his/her decisions.

2. When selecting supplementary instructional materials and resources for use in the classroom, the classroom teacher shall keep in mind the general selection criteria outlined in Board policy and shall abide by the following procedures:
 - a. Supplementary instructional materials and resources should only be selected to support, not supplant, textbooks and related core materials that have been adopted as a component of the District's standard curriculum.
 - b. All instructional materials and resources must be used in accordance with current copyright laws and licensing agreements.
 - c. The incorporation of relevant and brief media segments/clips within interactive learning activities that support particular academic standards, curricular goals, or learning objectives is encouraged, but the extended use of media resources for passive listening/viewing activities that occur during classroom instructional time is generally discouraged. Staff members are expected to
 1. Clearly identify any such passive listening/viewing activities (e.g., watching the entirety of a full-length film) within their lesson plans (by date(s) and total allocated time)
 2. Obtain the advance approval of the building principal prior to using any audio books, documentaries, films, etc. that were not previously evaluated and purchased by the District.
 3. Be prepared to justify the instructional value of their planned passive listening/viewing activities upon the request of the building principal.
 - d. Any member of the District's instructional staff must first consult with and obtain the prior approval of the District's Technology Coordinator prior to purchasing, using in the classroom, or directing students to access any computer media or other digital resource (including any Internet-based application) that
 1. Requires the District or any user to actively accept specific licensing terms, terms of service, or a subscription (including via a "click-through" agreement)
 2. Requires the installation of any software or plug-in application.
 3. Requires the creation/use of individual student accounts or logins.
 4. Tracks individual student progress for assessment or other purposes.
 5. Requires the submission of identifying information about any individual student(s)

- e. As with the selection of textbooks, the classroom teacher will consider the accessibility of the particular supplementary instructional material or resource for students with disabilities and other students who may require special formats (e.g., English Learners) and whether there are alternate materials or resources that can be used or accessed that will enable students with special needs to obtain the educational opportunities and benefits in a manner that is as timely, effective, and integrated as it is for other District students.

V. Use of Controversial Materials in the Classroom

The option is always open for a parent to object to a specific educational material being used with his/her child as a part of the educational program. The parent or guardian has the right to judge whether certain materials are acceptable for his/her child. However, no parent or organization has a legal right to abridge the rights of other parents or children to have access to materials which are a part of the School District's educational program. Occasionally, course objectives can be achieved through exposure to materials that may be considered controversial in nature. If in the professional judgment of the teacher, supervisor, or principal such material might be objectionable to a number of parents from the community, a letter must be sent to parents or guardians of students in the course prior to the use of the material(s) in question. The letter shall indicate the titles of the proposed material and offer to substitute alternative materials for any on the list considered objectionable by the parent or legal guardian.

VI. Procedures for Handling Challenged Materials

- A. Review
- B. Request for Review
- C. Review Process

A. Review

Any adult resident of the Williams Bay School District (WBSD) may raise objection to materials used in the educational program and ask that a specific title or titles be reviewed or reexamined. The term "review" used in this section will refer to reexamination or reevaluation of material based on a complaint resulting in the submission of a completed Request for Reconsideration of Educational Material form. It should not be confused with the normal reviewing process as a part of selection. This will not be considered to reflect adversely on the qualifications of the person or persons who made the selection.

Outlined below is the process the person should follow:

1. The school official or staff member receiving a request for review or reexamination regarding library or text materials shall explain (or seek assistance in explaining) to the requester the place this material occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its usefulness. The materials shall remain in use unless removed through the formal procedure herein provided.

2. In the event that the person asking for the review is not satisfied with the initial explanation, the person raising the question should be referred to the building principal. The complainant shall be apprised of the District's selection policy, criteria for selection, the reason for the selection and the judgment of other outside professionals, such as reviewers, regarding the material. Appropriate district-level personnel should be consulted for their expertise, which may contribute to a resolution of the issue. Upon completion of the building-level process, the complainant shall be informed of the school's decision regarding the material in question. Notification will be in writing and indicate name, material, and resolution.
3. If the building decision is unacceptable to the complainant, he/she may formally request an appeal of the use of the material in the educational program following the WBSD Challenged Materials review process.

B. Request for Review

1. All formal requests for review must be made on the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form (361.1 Exhibit).
2. The person asking for review is required to complete and submit the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form to the District Administrator within ten business days of the date on the written notification provided by the building principal.
3. If a completed Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form is not submitted within ten business days, the matter is considered closed.
4. The District Administrator shall present the formal complaint to the District's Materials Review Committee for reevaluation. The Materials Review Committee will consist of at least one teacher, librarian, principal, and a community member. The task of the Materials Review Committee will be to make a recommendation for disposition of the material in question to the District Administrator.

C. Review Process

1. At the first meeting following receipt of a Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form, (361.1 Exhibit)
 - a. The District Administrator or his/her appointee will prepare and distribute the following:
 - Copies of the written Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form
 - Copies of the material in question for full review
 - Reputable, professionally prepared reviews of the material if available
 - Appropriate checklist form for fiction or nonfiction material

- b. Discussion and procedures will be finalized as to how the committee will proceed.
2. At a subsequent meeting, a thorough discussion of the material will be conducted. Interested persons, including the person requesting the review, will have the opportunity to share their views in writing or in person. The committee may request individuals with special knowledge to present information to the committee.
3. With the understanding that the sole criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use, the committee shall make its decision in open session to recommend one of the following actions:
 - a. Take no removal action.
 - b. Remove all or part of the material from the total school environment.
 - c. Allow the use of alternate titles, selected by appropriate school personnel.
 - d. Limit the educational use of the material.
4. The written decision and its justification shall be forwarded to the District Administrator for appropriate action, to the person initiating the request, and to the appropriate building principal.
5. A request to review materials that have previously been before the committee must receive approval of a majority of the committee members before the materials shall be reconsidered. Requests with less than a two-year lapse will not be considered. Every Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials shall receive a written response from the committee.
6. If not satisfied with the decision, any person may request that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education for a final decision.
7. If the matter reaches the press, the District Administrator, or designee, will make the response.

Legal References: Wisconsin State Statutes 118.03, 118.13, 119.18, 120.13, 120.49, and 121.02 Adoption

APPROVED: November 13, 2023

