

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

A. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION/REVIEW:

The professional staff of the school district is responsible for the review, selection and implementation of instructional materials. Instructional materials will be selected to enhance student mastery of the district curriculum (inclusive of the state-mandated curriculum) standards and learning objectives. Both classroom curriculum materials and library media collections are considered instructional materials.

Textbooks will be selected, whenever possible, from the Oklahoma Annual Textbook Requisition list by the administration in collaboration with the staff. A Textbook selection committee shall be convened to review textbook materials and will be composed of teachers, administrators, and patrons as outlined in the Oklahoma Textbook Law (OS Title 70, Section 16-162). Patrons may review textbooks at the sites at any time.

Procedures for selecting additional instructional materials to complement the district adopted textbooks will be dependent on the grade level, the grade span and the scope of the materials. Individual teachers, library media specialists, department or grade-level chairpersons and administrators may individually and jointly make recommendations for the purchase of supplementary instructional materials. In every instance, the procedure for recommendation and purchase of such materials shall be approved by the building principal. Once purchases have been approved by the Board of Education, the materials are approved for instructional use.

B. LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM:

Philosophy: The primary objective of District library media programs is to provide curriculum support for the instructional programs. Materials in the library media centers are provided to meet information needs of students, for both academic projects and leisure reading. These materials are print, audiovisual, and electronic.

The library media specialist (LMS) will conduct a continuous collection development and evaluation process that focuses on regular, collaborative assessment of teaching and diverse learning needs, and the resources to meet them.

1. Goals and principles of the school library media program:

- a. The library media program is founded on a commitment to the right of intellectual freedom.
- b. The library media center will provide access to information and resources in a wide variety of formats to all students and staff.

- c. The library media center will utilize a wide variety of resources to assist with student mastery of subject and grade-level standards.
- d. The library media center will support the objectives of the school's curriculum.
- e. The library media program will continually strive to improve collections through emphasis on instructional needs of both teachers and students.

2. Criteria for the selection of materials:

- a. The following factors will be considered in the selection process:
 - Accuracy of information.
 - Appeal to age group.
 - Appropriateness of content considering developmental stages of students.
 - Favorable reviews in standard selection sources.
 - Objectivity and integrity.
 - Present and potential relevance.
 - Quality of illustrations, if applicable.
 - Quality of physical format.
 - Respect for and understanding of the multiethnic, pluralistic nature of The United States.
 - Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for intended audience.
 - Support of the curriculum.
 - Value commensurate with cost and/or need.
 - Variety of formats.
 - Varying points of view.

Books will not be excluded because of race, nationality, political view, or religious view of the author.

- b. Recommendations: The library will accept recommendations from the administration, faculty, students, patrons, and other interested persons. The final decision, however, will be made by the media director as approved by the building principal in accordance with the book selection policy.
- c. Gifts: Gifts and donated books, audiovisual materials, computer software and hardware must meet the same selection criteria as materials purchased by the District. Once accepted, these materials become the property of the District.
- d. Deselection or Weeding: Materials should be reviewed systematically and regularly to ensure that they meet the original selection criteria. Those that do not meet the criteria or that have become physically unusable should be removed from the collection. Examples of materials that are physically unusable are

those that are badly soiled, torn, loose from binding, broken, etc., and are beyond repair.

- e. Evaluation: Evaluation is a part of the continuous process of collection development. This activity should be done collaboratively, involving teachers, students, and staff. Library collections should be evaluated regularly to ensure that the collection is meeting its stated instructional goals.

C. Re-Evaluation

Materials selected as part of the curriculum of the Edmond Public Schools and as provided by school libraries are chosen for their literary, cultural, historical, artistic, technical, and scientific merit; for their contribution to the overall curricular goals and objectives of the school system; and for their appropriateness to the grade level(s) for which they are intended. Any parent has the right to request that his/her child be exempted from reading, viewing, or participating in any portion of the curriculum if it conflicts with that parent's values and beliefs. Individual parents may not, however, restrict what other children may read, view, or do.

D. Steps in the Re-Evaluation Procedure at the Building Level

If a parent has a complaint about some aspect of the curriculum, or any library media holdings, he/she should first meet with the teacher or media specialist involved and with the building principal. Most problems can be resolved at this level.

Teachers shall be required to offer alternative reading/viewing assignments of equal merit and value for children whose parents object to specific aspects of the regular curriculum.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the first step, he/she shall submit his/her complaint in writing, using the form available from the building principal. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the building principal shall notify the Superintendent and shall convene a building-level nine-member committee with the following members:

1. One (1) counselor or assistant principal
2. One (1) library media specialist to serve as a no-voting liaison/consultant
3. Two (2) teachers (NOT directly involved in the matter in question)
4. Two (2) parents (preferably of students attending school at the building)

The building principal will be the non-voting chair of the committee. The committee may request a detailed written statement of positions from the complainant and from the teacher(s) involved. The committee may invite the complainant and the teacher(s)

involved to appear at the meeting to present their positions. The committee shall vote and shall write its decision in a report to be presented to the complainant, the teacher(s) involved, and the Superintendent.

E. Steps in the Re-Evaluation Procedure at the District-Level

If either party to the above is not satisfied, he/she may appeal to the District-level by submitting his/her complaint in writing, using the form available from the Superintendent's office. This appeal must be submitted within a period of fifteen (15) working days, commencing from the date that the written decision of the building level committee is filed with the Superintendent's office. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the Superintendent or his/her designated representative, in consultation with other administrators within the District, shall appoint a District-level thirteen-member-committee composed of the following persons:

1. One (1) principal at the appropriate level (elementary (K-5) or secondary (6-12) but NOT from the building involved)
2. One (1) counselor or assistant principal at the appropriate level (elementary or secondary)
3. One (1) library media specialist at the appropriate level
4. Two (2) teachers competent in the relevant field at the appropriate level (but NOT directly involved in the complaint)
5. Five (5) parents from the appropriate level
6. One (1) non-voting student (secondary committees only)

The Superintendent or his/her designated representative from the administrative staff will be the non-voting chair of the committee. In the event of a tie vote, the chair will vote to break the tie. A secretary from the administrative staff will serve as recording secretary of the committee. Minutes of the meeting(s) will be available for review of all parties.

F. Procedures

1. Prior to the first meeting of the committee, the school's attorney will be consulted and asked to review the complaint with regard to legal questions, precedents, and ramifications. This information will be presented to the committee at its first meeting.
2. Copies of the original complaint and all documentation provided to the building-level committee shall be forwarded by the building-level chair to the District- level chair and committee.

3. All meetings will be open to the public.
4. At the initial meeting of the committee, it shall review the legal information, establish specific procedures, discuss guidelines, and make reading/viewing assignments.
5. All sides of the issue shall be allowed time to present their positions. The committee shall determine the format of such a hearing and establish time allotments for presentations.
6. The vote is a matter of public record and shall be taken in person.
7. The committee shall present a written report of its decision to the complainant, the site administrator, the Superintendent, and the Board of Education.

The material in question shall remain in the curriculum or on the library shelves until the District-level committee reaches a decision.

If any party is dissatisfied with the District-level committee's decision/action, he/she may appeal in writing directly to the Board. This appeal must be submitted within a period of fifteen (15) working days, commencing from the date that the written decision of the District-level committee is filed with the Superintendent's office. Final appeal action lies with the Board.

Two important matters of concern:

1. Speed is of the essence in the process. It should not be allowed to drag on for months. If it is necessary, teachers should be allowed to have substitutes in order to meet during the school day.
2. Objectivity is of key importance in the selection of both the building-level and District-level committees. The committees should be forums for open-minded decisions and decision-making, not battlegrounds for those directly involved. The committees should be composed of competent individuals who can bring intelligence, freedom from undue bias, and compassion, not passion to the consideration of the matters at hand. They should be persons who are willing and able to hear the views of all sides, to review all relevant materials from any sources, and to make as fair a decision as is possible for all concerned. The impartiality of the committees and the careful adherence to the outlined procedures are essential to ensure the integrity of the re-evaluation process.