

Education Programs

Selection and Objection of Instructional Text, Materials and Content

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for selection of instructional text, materials and content. The policy also provides a procedure for addressing an objection to the text, materials and/or content.

II. General Statement of Policy

The school district recognizes that selection of textbooks and instructional materials is a vital support for the school district's academic standards and curriculum. The school board has the authority to make final decisions on selection of instructional text, materials and content.

The academic standards and course outlines developed by the staff shall serve as the basis for instructional text, materials and content selection. Professional staff shall access libraries, online resources, instructional materials' centers, student support services, community resources and other appropriate resources in an effort to provide effective instruction for all students.

III. Responsibility of Selection

- A. The school board retains the authority to make final decisions on the selection of instructional text, materials and content. The professional staff's expertise and involvement is vital to the recommendation of instructional text, materials and content. The director of teaching and learning shall work directly with the staff in developing such recommendations.
- B. Based on the review of instructional text, materials and content during the selection process, the recommendations shall:
 1. support the academic standards of the education programs;
 2. consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
 3. foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and varied opinion;
 4. meet within the constraints of the school district budget;
 5. be in the English language. Another language may be used, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 124D.61;
 6. permit grade-level instruction for students to read and study America's

founding documents, including documents that contributed to the foundation or maintenance of America's representative form of limited government, the Bill of Rights, our free-market economic system, and patriotism; and

7. not censor or restrain instruction in American or Minnesota state history or heritage based on religious references in original source documents, writings, speeches, proclamations, or records.

C. The director of teaching and learning shall be responsible for developing procedures and guidelines to establish an orderly process for the review and recommendation of textbooks and other instructional materials by the professional staff. Such procedures and guidelines shall provide opportunity for input and consideration of the views of students, parents, and members of the school district community. This procedure shall be coordinated with the school district's curriculum development effort and may utilize the Student Achievement Committee.

IV. Selection and Review of Instructional Text, Materials and Content

A. The director of teaching and learning shall be responsible for keeping the school board informed of progress on the part of staff and others involved in the review and selection process.

B. The director of teaching and learning shall present recommendations to the school board after completion of the review process as outlined in this policy.

C. Upon school board approval, the director of teaching and learning shall be responsible for implementing the recommendations into the learning setting.

V. Objection to Instructional Text and/or Materials

A. The school district shall provide a process for district families and/or community members to object and seek reconsideration of select instructional text and/or materials.

B. The director of teaching and learning shall be responsible for the development of guidelines and procedures to identify the steps to be followed to seek reconsideration instructional text and/or materials.

VI. Objection to Instructional Content

A. Specific instructional content objections shall be directed to the building principal and/or director of teaching and learning. The school official will:

1. Treat each request with confidentiality.

2. Provide and explain the school district alternative instruction request process.

B. Upon receipt of the alternative instruction request:

1. The parent, guardian and/or adult student may submit an alternative instruction plan to the school official and certified staff (i.e. classroom teacher, department head and/or counselor). The school district will not pay for any alternative instruction costs.
2. All parties will review the plan.
3. The principal or designee will determine whether the alternative instruction is essentially equivalent to that provided as part of the adopted curriculum. The school district may evaluate and assess the quality of the student's alternative instruction work for grading purposes.
4. The decision of the principal or designee related to the request is final.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 9 (Compulsory Instruction – Curriculum)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.20 (Parental Curriculum Review)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.235 (American Heritage Education)

Minn. Stat. § 123B.02, Subd. 2 (General Powers of Independent School Districts)

Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, Subd. 8 (School Board Responsibilities)

Minn. Stat. § 124D.59-124D.61 (Limited English Proficiency)

Minn. Stat. § 127A.10 (State Officials and School Board Members to be Disinterested; Penalty)

Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260, 108 S.Ct. 562, 98 L.Ed.2d 592 (1988)

Pratt v. Independent Sch. Dist. No. 831, 670 F.2d 771 (8th Cir. 1982)

Cross References:

Policy 505 (Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees)

Policy 603 (Curriculum and Program Review and Development)

Policy 604 (Grade Level Configuration and Enrollment at School Sites)

Policy
adopted: 7/20/09

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 273
Edina, Minnesota

Appendix I

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL REVIEW

An orderly process of instructional resource and supplemental materials review insures an appropriate balance for those most concerned:

- The teachers who have the right to express their professional desires and opinions on the review and use of instructional resources and materials
- The students who have the right to express their desires and opinions on the review and use of instructional resources and materials
- The parents and community who have the right to express their desires and opinions on the review and use of instructional resources and materials

The process has three steps:

1. Evaluation of instructional materials according to specified criteria
2. Creation of a level of awareness among parents and community
3. Recommendation to school board for adoption of new instructional resources and materials

The amount of instructional material available makes it possible to offer alternatives to challenged or controversial material. Should students or parents have objections to any material, teachers shall offer substitute selections.

Appendix II

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL REVIEW PROCEDURE

LEVELS	A	B	C	D
People Materials	Person(s) responsible to carry out initial review	Person responsible to prepare document stating that review has taken place and criteria are addressed	If accepted, persons responsible to retain review	Persons responsible to the superintendent for content of materials and review process
1. Primary instructional resources available to every student	Teacher(s)	Teacher(s) requesting materials	Principal Curriculum leaders Director of teaching & learning	Principal Director of teaching & learning
2. Online and electronic learning resources	Teacher(s)	Teacher(s) requesting materials	Principal Curriculum leaders Director of teaching & learning Director of media & technology services	Principal Director of teaching & learning Director of media & technology services
3. Supplementary materials	Teacher(s)	Teacher(s) requesting materials	Principal Curriculum leaders Director of teaching & learning	Principal Director of teaching & learning
4. Library books, magazines, films and other material in media center(s)	Media specialist(s) Teacher(s)	Media specialist(s)	Director of media & technology services	Director of media & technology services Director of teaching & learning
5. Library books, magazines, films and other material not in media center(s)	Teacher(s)	Teacher(s) considering materials	Principal Director of teaching & learning	Director of teaching & learning

Appendix III

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF MATERIALS

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City _____

Complainant represents: Self _____ Organization _____ Group _____

1. To what in the material do you object to? (Please be specific; cite pages)

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this material?

3. For what age group would you recommend this material? _____

4. What do you think is good about this material? _____

5. Are you aware of the evaluation of this material by educational critics? _____

Which critics? _____

6. What do you believe is the theme of this material? _____

7. What would you like your school to do about this material?

- Do not assign it to my child
- Withdraw it from all students, as well as my child
- Send it back to the appropriate department office for reevaluation

8. In its place, what material of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as complete and accurate a picture and perspective of the topic?

9. Comments: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Complainant

Appendix IV

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Controversial issues may be discussed in the classroom, provided that:

1. The issue is related to the course of study and provides opportunities for critical thinking, for developing tolerance, and for understanding conflicting points of view.
2. The issue has meaningful relationship to matters of concern to the students.
3. Available information about the issue is sufficient to allow alternative points of view to be discussed and evaluated on a factual basis.
4. All sides of the issue are given a proper hearing, using established facts as primary evidence.
5. The issue has points of view which can be understood and defined by the students.
6. The teacher does not use his/her position to forward his/her own religious, political, economic or social bias. The teacher may express a personal opinion if he/she identifies it as such and does not express the opinion for the purpose of persuading students to his/her point of view.
7. Discussion or study of the issue is instigated by the students or the established curriculum, but not by a source outside of the schools.
8. The discussion does not reflect adversely upon persons because of their race, sex, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, handicap or occupation.
9. The oral or written presentation does not violate state or federal law.

The director of teaching and learning shall have the authority to judge whether the above conditions are being met.