

Instruction

Library Media Centers

Purpose

The Board of Education recognizes that school libraries support the educational program by providing access to a variety of informational and supplemental resources that can help raise the academic achievement of all students. The Board desires that school libraries be stocked with up-to-date books, reference materials, and electronic resources that promote literacy, support academic standards, and prepare students to become lifelong learners.

Library materials shall be evaluated and selected through a process that invites recommendations from administrators, teachers, other staff, parents/guardians, and students as appropriate.

Library materials shall be continually evaluated in relation to evolving curricula, new formats of materials, new instructional methods, Board Priorities, and the needs of students and teachers. Materials that contain outdated subject matter or are no longer appropriate shall be removed.

All gifts and donations of school library materials shall be subject to the same criteria as materials selected for purchase by the District.

Formal Complaint

After discussing the concerns with the school principal, if not satisfied with the principal's initial response, the complainant shall present a written complaint using the District form to the principal. Complaints regarding printed material shall name the author, title, and publisher and shall identify the objection by page and item numbers. Complainants shall sign all complaints and provide identifying information so that the District is able to make a proper reply.

The District shall accept complaints concerning library materials only from students or parents/guardians of children currently enrolled in a District school. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Complaints regarding the appropriateness of library materials shall be properly and fairly considered using the District's procedures for complaints regarding instructional materials.

During the investigation of the complaint, the challenged library material may remain in use until a final decision has been reached. However, upon request of the parent/guardian who has filed the complaint, the parent/guardian has the opportunity to opt out their child from checking out library books until a resolution has been reached.

Instruction

Library Media Centers

The review committee shall review the criteria specified in Board policy and shall determine the extent to which the challenged material supports the curriculum, the educational appropriateness of the material, and its suitability for the age level of the student. Within 30 days of being convened, the review committee shall summarize its findings in a written report.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the complainant of the committee's decision within 15 days of receiving the committee's report.

Within 10 days of receiving the committee's report the complainant may appeal the review committee's decision to the Superintendent in writing stating why they do not agree with the findings of the review committee. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

When any challenged instructional material is reviewed by the District, it shall not be subject to further reconsideration for five years, unless the Superintendent determines that reconsideration is warranted.

Proposed Membership

The District's review process for evaluating instructional materials shall involve teachers in a substantial manner and shall encourage the participation of parents/guardians of current District students in accordance with Education Code 60002. The review process shall also involve administrators, other staff who have subject-matter expertise, and students as appropriate. The Superintendent or designee shall seek input from committee members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

The review committee membership will be formed in August/September of each school year and be consistent for the entirety of that school year and will meet as necessary to respond to requests for review. The committee will be comprised of two sub-groups, elementary and secondary, in order to provide the sub-committees expertise on age, content standards, maturity and developmental appropriateness of materials.

- District Leadership
 - Executive Directors (Elementary or Secondary)
 - Senior Director, Coordinator, or Teacher Specialists (Teaching and Learning)
- Site Principal(s)
 - 1-2 Principal(s) representative of the level being considered

Instruction

Library Media Centers

- Classroom Teachers
 - 4-5 teachers with classroom experience from elementary and/or secondary schools based on the level of books/materials being considered
- 1-2 Library Technician or Library Assistant
- 3 parents/guardians of current District students
- 2-3 representatives from Student Advisory Committee

Process

The committee shall examine whether the book or library materials meet the objectives of the selection process and should seek to remove subjectivity by instructing the committee to consider only educationally relevant criteria, including:

1. Meets the requirements of Education Code 60040-60043 for accurately portraying society's cultural and racial diversity.
2. The visual elements and content enhance the understanding and engagement, are diverse, accurate and free from stereotypes and biases. Does not reflect adversely upon persons because of any characteristic specified in law nor contains any sectarian or denominational doctrine or propaganda contrary to law.
3. Accuracy and completeness for non-fiction.
4. Alignment to California content standards and supports learning outcomes.
5. Reviews, awards and recommendations by educational experts.
6. Age appropriateness and accessibility for the intended audience. This refers to whether or not students of the relevant age levels have the maturity and literacy skills to comprehend a book's message. The concepts are presented in a developmentally appropriate manner.
7. The popularity of the work among students.
8. The presence of salient themes and discussion of timely sociopolitical issues. The material is presented in a manner that encourages respectful dialogue and critical thinking and presents balanced and objective viewpoints.

Instruction

Library Media Centers

Legal Reference: Education Code, Sections 51501; 60002; 60041; 60042; 60043; 60044

Rules Approved: 08/04/2023

Rules Revised: 09/01/2023