

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY MODEL

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(Your School)
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY MODEL

CONTENTS

I.	Mission Statements	3
II.	Philosophy	3
III.	Selection	3
IV.	Gifts	4
V.	Deselection	4
VI.	Reconsideration of Materials	4
VII.	Appendix	7
	• Appendix A: American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights	8
	• Appendix B: Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights	9
	• Appendix C: Access for Children and Young Adults to Non-Print Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights	10
	• Appendix D: Challenged Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights	12
	• Appendix E: Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources (Sample)	13
	• Appendix F: Letter to Complainant (Sample)	14
	• Appendix G: ALA Confidentiality of Library Records	15

I. MISSION STATEMENTS

School District:

(Individual School's mission statement)

School Library:

The mission of the (your school) library media center program is to make available to the school community a collection of materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, meet state standards, and encourage lifelong learning.

II. PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of (*your school*) library media program is that the library is an integral and essential part of the educational program. Student academic achievement is directly enhanced by a strong and well-supported library media program. Our philosophy also reflects the policies outlined in the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, the American Association of School Librarians' *School Library Bill of Rights* and the National Council of Teachers of English *Students' Right to Read*.

III. SELECTION

A. Responsibility:

1. The Board of Education is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of *(School Name)*.
2. The District delegates the responsibility for selection of library materials to the library media specialist(s) employed by the District. The term "materials" includes print, nonprint, computer and other electronic materials and services.

B. Criteria for Selection:

Materials selected for inclusion in the collection of the (your library name) shall satisfy the following:

1. Materials shall be chosen to enrich and support the curriculum and the educational, emotional, and recreational needs of the users.
2. Materials shall meet high standards of quality in:
 - a. Physical format
 - b. Treatment of subject
 - c. Accuracy and currency of information
 - d. Arrangement and organization
 - e. Literary style
 - f. Authority
 - g. Cost
 - h. Diversity
 - i. Permanence
3. Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of (your school) students.
4. Materials shall represent differing viewpoints of controversial issues so that the users may be motivated to engage in critical analysis of such issues, to explore their own beliefs, attitudes, and behavior, and to make intelligent judgements in their everyday lives.

C. Procedure for Selection:

1. In selecting materials for the school library media center, the library media specialist(s) will evaluate the existing collection and curriculum needs, consider the weeding and replacement plans, and consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate sources.
2. The library media specialist(s) will seriously consider recommendations for purchase from the school community.
3. To meet these needs, ordering must take place throughout the school year. New books and timely materials are published continuously. Curriculum needs and reading interests change on an ongoing basis.
4. The use of reputable, professional review journals and favorable reviews from at least two sources are preferred. Examples of these sources include School Library Journal, Booklist, and the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books.

D. Coordinated Cooperative Collection Development (CCCD):

The purpose of Coordinated Cooperative Collection Development is to create and maintain in-depth specialized subject areas within a collection for the purpose of research and resource sharing (Interlibrary Loan).

E. Internet:

In keeping with our role as a source of information, the library provides Internet access to information beyond the confines of our collection. The Internet affords us an exciting opportunity to have immediate access to timely and comprehensive information as well as a wide variety of primary sources. Providing connections to global information services and networks outside the library is different from selecting and purchasing materials for the library collection. The Internet changes rapidly, frequently, and unpredictably. As the vast amount of information on the Internet is generated outside the library, the library cannot be responsible for accuracy, authenticity, currency, availability, or completeness of information. We cannot insure that Internet communications are secure or private. Because of the library's limitations, the user is responsible for using discretion when considering the quality of material, questioning the validity of information, and choosing what is individually appropriate.

IV. GIFTS

Gift material(s) shall be judged by the selection criteria and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.

V. DESELECTION

Weeding is a continuing process of evaluating resources and removing items that no longer meet the selection criteria. The library media specialist(s) may use, but is not limited to, the following criteria when weeding materials.

- a. Outdated
- b. Inaccurate
- c. Worn
- d. Unused
- e. Superfluous
- f. Duplicate
- g. No longer support curriculum

VI. RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

The *(your school)* library media program upholds the principles of intellectual freedom, which are inherent in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and in the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*.

If library materials are questioned, the principles of intellectual freedom should be defended rather than the material.

No duly selected materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the school except upon the recommendation of a Reconsideration Committee, with the concurrence of the Superintendent.

A. Procedures for Challenged Materials:

1. All complaints shall be reported to the building principal involved, whether received by telephone, letter, or in personal conversation.
2. The principal may contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve it informally by explaining the philosophy and goals of the school district and/or the library media center.
3. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant shall be supplied with a packet of materials consisting of the *Cover Letter to Complainant*, the district's instructional goals and objectives, materials selection policy, and the procedure for handling objections. This packet also will include a standard printed form, which shall be completed and returned before consideration will be given to the complaint.
4. If the principal has not received the formal request for reconsideration within two weeks, the matter shall be considered closed.
5. Upon receipt of a completed objection form, the principal in the building involved will convene a committee of at least five to consider the complaint. This committee should include the following professionals from the building level involved: the principal, the library media specialist, and a teacher.
6. The following materials will be provided to the committee members: the District's *Library Materials Selection Policy*, a complaint form, the challenged material, published reviews of the challenged material, and any other pertinent information.
7. In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child (or children) of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.
8. The committee shall meet to discuss the materials, following the guidelines set forth in *Instructions to Reconsideration Committee*, and shall prepare a report on the material containing the committee's recommendations on disposition of the matter.
9. The principal shall send a formal report and recommendation to the Superintendent.
10. The principal shall then notify the complainant of the decision and explain how the decision was reached.
11. The appropriate school personnel shall retain the written report.
12. If the complainant is still not satisfied, he or she may ask the Superintendent to present an appeal to the Board of Education, which shall make a final determination of the issue. The Board of Education may seek assistance from outside organizations such as the American Library Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, etc., in making its determination.

B. Instructions to Reconsideration Committee:

The reconsideration committee shall:

1. Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to learn and to read. Base their decision on these broad principles rather than on defense of individual materials. Freedom of inquiry is vital to education in a democracy.
2. Examine the challenged material.
3. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the material.
4. Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
5. Discuss the challenged material in the context of the educational program.
6. Discuss the challenged material with the person(s) who made the challenge when appropriate.

7. Present the committee's written recommendation, representing both majority and minority opinions, to the principal who in turn will forward the committee's recommendation to the complainant and the superintendent.

Appendix

Appendix A

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

Appendix B

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE *LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS*

The school library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shapes the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the *Library Bill of Rights* apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs.

School library media specialists assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry. School library media specialists work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media specialists cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources appropriate to the needs and to the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources that support the mission of the school district and are consistent with its philosophy, goals, and objectives. Resources in school library media collections are an integral component of the curriculum and represent diverse points of view on both current and historical issues. These resources include materials that support the intellectual growth, personal development, individual interests, and recreational needs of students.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equal access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources that reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media specialists resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access via electronic means.

Major barriers between students and resources include but are not limited to imposing age or grade level restrictions on the use of resources; limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information; charging fees for information in specific formats; requiring permission from parents or teachers; establishing restricted shelves or closed collections; and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

The school board adopts policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media specialists implement district policies and procedures in the school.

Adopted July 2, 1986; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000, January 19, 2005, by the ALA Council.

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Appendix C

ACCESS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS TO NONPRINT MATERIALS An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library collections of nonprint materials raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors. Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, “A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.”

The American Library Association’s principles protect minors’ access to sound, images, data, games, software, and other content in all formats such as tapes, CDs, DVDs, music CDs, computer games, software, databases, and other emerging technologies. ALA’s *Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights* states:

. . . The “right to use a library” includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

. . . [P]arents—and only parents—have the right and responsibility to restrict access of their children—and only their children—to library resources. Parents who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Policies that set minimum age limits for access to any nonprint materials or information technology, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Age limits based on the cost of the materials are also unacceptable. Librarians, when dealing with minors, should apply the same standards to circulation of nonprint materials as are applied to books and other print materials except when directly and specifically prohibited by law.

Recognizing that librarians cannot act *in loco parentis*, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children’s reading and viewing. Libraries should provide published reviews and/or reference works that contain information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences for nonprint materials. These resources will assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the library in censorship.

In some cases, commercial content ratings, such as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) movie ratings, might appear on the packaging or promotional materials provided by producers or distributors. However, marking out or removing this information from materials or packaging constitutes expurgation or censorship.

MPAA movie ratings, Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) game ratings, and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing (*Expurgation of Library Materials*). For the library to add ratings to nonprint materials if they are not already there is unacceptable. It is also unacceptable to post a list of such ratings with a collection or to use them in circulation policies or other procedures. These uses constitute labeling, “an attempt to prejudice attitudes” (*Labels and Rating Systems*), and are forms of censorship. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the *Library Bill of Rights*.

The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people's access to materials and services that reflect diversity of content and format sufficient to meet their needs.

Adopted June 28, 1989. Amended June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council.

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Appendix D

CHALLENGED MATERIALS: AN INTERPRETATION OF *THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS*

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined materials selection policy in written form which reflects *the Library Bill of Rights*, and which is approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged materials which meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the library should not be removed under any legal or extra-legal pressure. The *Library Bill of Rights* states in Article I that “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation,” and in Article II that “Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.” Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is a part of this procedure.

Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

Adopted June 25, 1971; amended July 1, 1981; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

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Appendix E

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES

The school board of (your school) has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library/educational resources to the school library media specialist/curriculum committee, and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of school or library resources, please return the completed form to the building principal within two weeks.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Do you represent self? ____ Organization? ____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

____ Book ____ Textbook ____ Video ____ Display ____ Magazine ____ Library Program

____ Audio Recording ____ Newspaper ____ Electronic information/network (please specify):

Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic? _____

Appendix F

COVER LETTER TO COMPLAINANT:

Date

Dear _____ :

We appreciate your concern over the use of _____ in our school district. The district has developed procedures for selecting materials but realizes that not everyone will agree with every selection made.

To help you understand the selection process, we are sending copies of the district's:

1. Instructional goals and objectives
2. Materials Selection Policy statement
3. Procedure for Handling Objections

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the Request for Reconsideration of Material form and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request. If I have not heard from you within two weeks, it will be assumed you no longer wish to file a formal complaint.

Sincerely,

(your principal's name)

Principal

Appendix G

ALA Confidentiality of Library Records

The members of the American Library Association, * recognizing the right to privacy of library users, believe that records held in libraries which connect specific individuals with specific resources, programs or services, are confidential and not to be used for purposes other than routine record keeping: i.e., to maintain access to them to arrange facilities, to provide resources for the comfort and safety of patrons, or to accomplish the purposes of the program or service. The library community recognizes that children and youth have the same rights to privacy as adults.

Libraries whose record keeping systems reveal the names of users would be in violation of the confidentiality of library record laws adopted in many states. School library media specialists are advised to seek the advice of counsel if in doubt about whether their record keeping systems violate the specific laws in their states. Efforts must be made within the reasonable constraints of budgets and school management procedures to eliminate such records as soon as reasonably possible.

With or without specific legislation, school library media specialists are urged to respect the rights of children and youth by adhering to the tenets expressed in the Confidentiality of Library Records Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights and the ALA Code of Ethics.

*ALA Policy 52.4, 54.16