

Policy Title:	Selection of Library Materials	Policy ID:	
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I. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is **Support for Intellectual Freedom**

The District explicitly supports the right of our students and faculty to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Accordingly:

- Our libraries will provide an impartial environment in which students, faculty, and their interests are brought together and are able to access a broad spectrum of knowledge and opinions.
- Books and other library resources are provided for the interest, information, and education of all the students and faculty our libraries serve.
- Materials shall not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Policy Scope

All schools in the Hartford School District must comply with this policy.

III. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

1. **Library Materials** include all materials considered part of the library collection, including but not limited to print, digital, and media production resources. Library materials may be found in both physical and virtual library spaces.
2. **Educational Technology** means instruction and/or preparation in the appropriate use of current technology to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to communicate, solve problems, and to access, manage, integrate, evaluate and create information.^[1]
3. **Diverse library collection** means that the library collection intentionally contains content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences, including those from traditionally marginalized and underrepresented communities.

IV. Policy Statement

Library Material Selection

The District's librarians are responsible for developing and managing collections that meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of the District. The library collections should provide faculty and students with materials that enrich and support the curriculum and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Library collections provide students with a wide range of educational materials at varying levels of difficulty and in a variety of formats. Collections represent a diversity of voices, appeal to various audiences, and represent differing points of view.
- Library collections present various sides of controversial issues to provide students with opportunities to develop analytical skills and thus make informed decisions.
- Library collections provide patrons with materials in a variety of formats, including print, audio, and digital. Collections are current, varied, and of high quality, with the goal of developing and strengthening students' love of reading.

Responsibility for Selection and Selection Criteria

The School Board hereby delegates to the Superintendent of Schools the authority and responsibility to oversee selection of library materials in all formats. Our professionally trained library personnel shall use the following selection criteria when acquiring library materials. The materials must:

- Support and enrich the curriculum and/or students' personal interests and learning
- Meet high standards in literary, artistic, and aesthetic quality, technical aspects, and physical format
- Be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development of the students for whom the materials are selected
- Incorporate accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources
- Earn favorable reviews in standard reviewing sources and/or favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
- Exhibit a high degree of potential user appeal and interest

- Represent differing viewpoints on controversial issues
- Provide a global perspective and promote diversity by including materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures
- Include a variety of resources in physical and virtual formats including print and non-print formats, such as electronic and multimedia (including subscription databases and other online products, e-books, educational games, and other forms of emerging technologies)
- Demonstrate physical format, appearance, and durability suitable to their intended use
- Balance cost with need

Library Acquisitions Procedures

- In selecting learning resources, library personnel will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs. Library personnel will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids to selection, and other appropriate sources. The actual resource will be examined whenever possible.
- Recommendations for purchase from administrators, teachers, students, district personnel, and community members will be accepted and evaluated by the same selection criteria.
- Gift materials will be judged by the selection criteria and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.
- Selection is an ongoing process that should include removing materials that are no longer used or needed, adding materials, and replacing lost and worn materials that still have educational value.

Special Collections

Any special collections in the district's libraries shall reflect the unique character and mission of the schools in which these libraries serve.

Selection of Materials on Controversial Topics

The School Board believes that it is the responsibility of the District to provide a wide range of materials of different levels of difficulty, representing different points of view. District libraries will provide materials containing opposing viewpoints on controversial issues. Such

materials will enable students to develop critical thinking skills, to become **critical** users of information, and to become informed citizens in our society. When selecting materials, school librarians will take into consideration students' age, emotional development, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Gifts and Donations

Gifts and donations to the District's libraries are accepted with the understanding that the decision for use and disposition of the materials and/or funds will be determined using the same selection criteria as purchased materials. All materials should support the curriculum and needs of library users. Gifts and donations, like purchased resources, will be removed from the collection at the end of their useful life.

Library Collection Maintenance and Weeding

The school librarians will conduct an inventory of the District's library collections and equipment on a periodic basis. This inventory will be used to determine losses and remove damaged or worn materials which can then be considered for replacement. The inventory may also be used to

deselect and remove materials that are no longer relevant to the curriculum or of interest to students. Additionally, school librarians shall develop a collection maintenance plan that includes systematic inspection of materials that would result in weeding outdated, damaged, or irrelevant materials from the collection.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Despite the careful selection of library resources and the qualification of those involved in the selection process, objections to library resources that are deemed offensive or inappropriate may occur. Any resident, employee, or student of the School District may request the reconsideration of a specific library resource. During an informal complaint or a formal reconsideration of a library resource, the following principles shall be followed:

- Any person has the right to express concerns about library resources and expect to have the objection taken seriously.
- Parents or guardians have the right to guide the reading, viewing, and listening of their children but must give the same right to other parents/guardians.
- When library resources are reconsidered, the principles of the freedom to read, listen, and view are defended rather than specific materials.
- A questioned item will be considered in its entirety, not judged solely on portions taken out of context.
- Questioned items will remain in circulation during the entire reconsideration process.

The procedure for reconsideration shall be as follows;

1. All complaints will first be communicated to the school librarian or principal involved. The librarian or principal will listen attentively to the complaint and attempt to resolve the matter informally. During this conversation, the librarian or principal will explain the selection policy, selection criteria, selection process, and diversity of collection with materials that represent multiple points of view.
2. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant will be supplied a packet of materials consisting of the district's instructional goals and objectives, materials selection policy statement, and the procedure for handling objections. This packet will also include a standard printed form which shall be completed by the complainant and returned to the principal before consideration will be given to the complaint.
3. If the formal request for reconsideration has not been received by the principal within two weeks, the issue will be considered closed.
4. Upon receipt of a completed objection form, the principal in the building involved will form a Reconsideration Committee made up of:
 - The librarian who oversees the library containing the library resource being reconsidered
 - The Administrator of the school housing the library
 - A member of the school faculty
5. If the library resource being reconsidered is housed in multiple school libraries, then a single individual, representing each of the above constituencies, will be chosen to participate on the Reconsideration Committee.
6. The Reconsideration Committee shall make a formal recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools regarding the removal of the library resource from the District's libraries.
7. The Superintendent of Schools shall then have three business days to reach a decision regarding the requested reconsideration. The Superintendent of Schools' decision regarding the reconsideration shall be final, unless appealed to the School Board within one week of the Superintendent's announcing the decision.
8. Any appeal of a reconsideration decision to the School Board will be heard by the Board in a public hearing, following the procedures used by the Board when acting in its quasi-judicial role. The person requesting the reconsideration will present their argument for reconsideration of the library resource. The Superintendent of Schools will present the argument for retaining or removing the resource. The Board may, at its discretion, allow either party to call on witnesses or experts to support their respective positions.

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Materials

Author _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Material format:

Printed

Audio

Visual

Request initiated by _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone number _____

Email address

Citizen represents:

themselves

Organization (name organization) _____

Other group (identify other group)

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

What do you feel might be the result of consulting this material?

For what age group would you recommend this material

Is there anything good about this material?

Did you read or view the entire work? _____ If not, which parts did you read or view? _____

Are you aware of the judgment of this book by education and literary authorities?

What do you believe is the theme of this work?

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 from my child

send it back to the department office for reevaluation

In its place, what material of equal literary and educational quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

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Legal Reference(s):

16 V.S.A. §563(14) (Powers of school boards)

State Board of Education Rules 2121.2 (Staff)

State Board of Education Rules 2114 (Definition of Technology Integration)

State Board of Education Rules 2122.2 (Access to Instructional Materials)

Responsible Owner:	Hartford School District	Contact(s): email	T.DeBalsi
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