

Section I: Instruction

IJJ SELECTION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The Board is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the schools, including the provision of instructional materials and maintenance of media resources that support the school's curriculum.

While the Board retains its authority to approve the selection of instructional materials, it recognizes the educational expertise of its professional staff and the need for such staff to be involved in the recommendation of instructional materials. The Board delegates responsibility for the selection of instructional materials and media resources to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school, subject to the criteria and procedures for selection and the Board's policy on challenged materials as described below.

Selection of Materials

The Director, in consultation with administrators and professional staff, is responsible for selecting instructional materials and media resources. This includes textbooks, books, print materials, software, online resource materials, multimedia materials and information technology. The Director is responsible for developing any administrative procedures necessary to guide the review and selection of educational materials, and may delegate specific responsibilities to staff as they deem appropriate. All administrative procedures must be consistent with this policy. The Director is expected to keep the Board generally informed about educational materials purchased for Region 8.

Criteria for Selection

Quality educational materials and resources are essential to student learning and supporting the school educational goals and objectives.

Instructional and media materials selected should:

- A. Support student achievement of the content standards of the system of Learning Results;
- B. Support the goals and objectives of the school educational programs;
- C. Enrich and support the curriculum;
- D. Take into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students served;
- E. Foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and varied opinions;
- F. Stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, ethical standards, and critical analysis;
- G. Provide information that will enable students to make informed decisions in their daily lives;
- H. Be accurate and current;
- I. Reflect high quality scholarship and presentation;
- J. Represent significant authors/composers and works; and
- K. Respect the constraints of the school's budget.

In evaluating software, multimedia materials and online/Internet resources, additional factors that should be considered include purpose for use; content; format (degree of interactivity or student involvement); appropriate use of graphics, sound and animation; feedback provided; and ease of use.

Selection Procedures

The highest priority shall be meeting the instructional needs of the individual programs. In meeting this priority, preference shall be given to basic learning materials, i.e., those that are the predominant instructional materials used at particular grade levels or courses and/or are essential to student achievement of Learning Results content standards.

Before selecting/recommending materials for purchase, professional staff should evaluate the existing collection, consult with staff from appropriate departments and/or grade levels, personally review the material and obtain recommendations/reviews regarding the material from appropriate reputable sources.

In accordance with state regulations, social studies textbooks should not be older than five years unless up-to-date supplemental instructional materials are also available.

Multiple copies of materials should be purchased as needed and within budgetary constraints. Worn or missing materials should be replaced as needed. Outdated materials or materials that are no longer in demand should be withdrawn from the collection and/or circulation.

Donated Materials

Gift materials are judged by the same criteria as materials selected by the school staff and in accordance with any applicable Board policies on gifts and donations.

Inspection of Materials by Parents and Opt-Out Requests

A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon request, any instructional or media materials used as part of the curriculum. Such requests shall be made to the appropriate teacher or the Director. Access to the materials shall be provided within a reasonable time after such a request is made. The Director may develop any administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

If a parent/guardian wishes to restrict their child's access to particular instructional materials, the procedure in Board policy IMBB shall be followed.

Challenged Materials Procedure

This procedure applies only to requests to remove materials from the school's collection or curriculum. Individual exemption requests are subject to Board policy IMBB. In the event that a student, parent, staff or community member has a concern regarding particular materials or requests removal of particular material from the curriculum or collection, the following procedure will be followed:

- A. The complainant must discuss their concern first with the person providing the material in question. Individual staff members may discuss concerns, but do not have the authority to remove materials from the curriculum media collection.

- B. If the complainant is not satisfied, they shall be referred to the building administrator and requested to fill out the "Citizen's Challenge to Educational Media" form. A copy of the form will be forwarded to the Director.
- C. The Director shall appoint a committee composed of the following persons to review the complaint: two classroom teachers; the Assistant Director, Student Services Coordinator and one Program Advisory Committee (PAC) member.
- D. The review committee shall read and examine the materials referred to them; check general acceptance of materials by reading reviews; weigh the values and faults of the material. Committee members are expected to form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages or portions pulled out of context. The Committee should generally be neutral toward viewpoints expressed in materials, and may ask the Director to consult legal counsel for advice concerning any questions involving freedom of speech or expression. The committee shall meet to discuss the material and prepare a written report with their recommendations.
- E. The committee shall provide the final report to the Director, who will inform the complainant of the results.
- F. No material shall be removed from use until the Director has made a final decision.
- G. The Director's decision may be appealed to the Board. The Board may set aside a portion of a regular meeting or call a special meeting to review the complaint and the committee report, and to receive testimony from representatives of the various points of view. The material in question shall be:
 - 1. Reviewed objectively and in its full content;
 - 2. Evaluated in terms of the needs and interests of students, school, curriculum and community;
 - 3. Considered in the light of differing opinions; and
 - 4. Reviewed in light of the criteria set forth in this policy.

The Board will announce its decision in writing not later than the conclusion of the next regular meeting of the Board.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRS §§ 1001 (10-A), 1055 (4), 4002
Chapter 125 (Maine Department of Education Rules)

Cross Reference: IMBB – Exemption from Required Instruction

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