

POLICY # 1.31
MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY | WEEDING STATEMENT | REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Statement of Philosophy

It is the policy of the Eufaula Board of Education to provide a broad range of educational materials to enrich and support the educational curriculum and to meet the needs of individual students and teachers. The professional staff should provide students with a wide range of materials of diverse appeal. Materials should be available in a variety of formats and represent varying levels of difficulty and varying points of view. In selecting materials, principles outweigh personal opinion. Materials are considered for their quality and appropriateness.

Definitions

Media materials are those prints and non-print materials housed and/or cataloged in media centers. This includes books, periodicals, and audio-visual materials.

A patron is a student, the parent or the guardian of a student, or a current resident of the school district .

Responsibility for Selection

The Eufaula Board of Education assumes legal responsibility for the selection of materials.

This responsibility is delegated as follows.

Textbooks: Textbooks will be selected, when possible, from the Oklahoma Annual Textbook Requisition list. Professional staff members will make the selection under the direction of the department or grade level chairperson with the guidance of a building administrator. The procedure will vary according to grade level and grade span. Each principal or designee will arrange for teachers and patrons to examine textbooks being considered for adoption and will supply the district committee with a tally of votes from the teachers who would be using the textbook. Patrons may examine the textbook samples on-site. A district textbook committee will be composed of teachers, administrators and at least one lay member. (A lay member will be appointed by the superintendent according to School Laws of Oklahoma , Article 15, Section 337) . District textbook committee meetings will be open to the public (Article 16, Section 343).

Other Instructional Materials: The selection procedure will vary with the grade level, the grade span and the scope of the material. Such materials may be previewed and selected by individual teachers, library media specialists, department or grade-level chairpersons, administrators, or jointly to meet

curriculum objectives. In all cases, the procedure for recommendation and purchase of such materials shall be approved by the building principal or designee.

Gift Materials: Gift materials will be evaluated by the criteria outlined above and shall be accepted or rejected in accordance with those criteria.

Media Center Materials: Responsibility for the selection of all library materials is delegated to the professional library staff through the building principal. The selection process involves open opportunity for consultation with administrators, faculty, supervisors, and students. Selection is based upon evaluation by the professional library staff, using professional library tools and other review media.

Criteria

In selecting materials, library staff, administrators, and faculty are guided by the principles incorporated in the School Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, standards adopted by the American Association of School Librarians, and the School Library Standards of the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Materials selected should support and be consistent with the district's general educational goals and the educational goals and objectives of our individual schools and specific courses;

Materials selected should support and enrich both the curriculum and the personal needs of our students and faculty. The collection will be developed systematically, taking into consideration diverse interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, maturity levels, and students' extracurricular interests.

Materials selected should encourage an appreciation for both informational and recreational reading, viewing, or listening;

Care will be taken to select materials meeting standards of high quality including;

Educational significance - Physical format - Presentation, including specific features, such as indexes, table of contents - Illustrations - Photographs - Maps - Charts - Graphs -Authenticity/accuracy in factual content - Artistic quality or literary style - Technical production/construction that is well-crafted, durable manageable, and attractive

Materials should be considered relating to their overall purpose and their direct relationship to instructional objectives and/or the curriculum. Selected materials should support needs in the content areas and be appropriate to the variety of

ages, developmental stages, ability levels, and learning styles represented by the particular facility for which they are chosen;

Materials should be selected representing opposing points of view on controversial issues, encouraging individual analysis;

The literary style of a work should be appropriate and effective for the subject matter and its intended readers or viewers;

The value of any work must be examined as a whole. The impact of an entire work will be considered, transcending individual words, phrases, and incidents;

Materials will be purchased in a variety of formats with efforts made to incorporate emerging technology when they meet the criteria outlined above;

Procedures for Selection

The media specialist will be responsible for the selection of materials.

In coordinating this process, the media specialist will:

Use reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids. Among the sources which may be consulted are: American Film and video Association Evaluations - The Best in Children's Books - Book Report - Booklist - Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books - Children's Software Review - Horn Book - Kirkus Reviews - Library Journal - Library Talk - Multimedia Schools - Reference books for School Libraries - School Library Journal - Technology Connection - Voya - CD-ROMS for - Schools and Libraries - Other sources as appropriate

When possible, items will be examined prior to purchase

Recommendations will be considered from faculty, administrators, students and parents

Duplicates of extensively used materials will be purchased

Replacements for worn, damaged, or missing materials will be purchased if basic to the collection

Weeding

Weeding is essential to maintaining a relevant, attractive collection. The collection of the media information center will be continually reevaluated in relation to the evolving curriculum, new formats of materials, new instructional methods, and the needs of its users. Materials no longer appropriate should be removed. Materials no longer needed to support the curriculum or student/faculty interests

or information containing inaccurate information should be removed. Lost and worn materials of lasting value should be replaced, if possible.

Procedure for challenged materials

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will establish a Materials Review Committee. This committee will be provide information concerning the materials review process, the district's Materials Selection and Review policy, First Amendment Rights, and the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights. The committee will be comprised of a media specialist, reading specialist and/or teacher from the school, the building principal, and a parent member of the school management team.

The following procedures will be followed when appropriateness of an item in the collection is challenged.

A Eufaula Public School patron may express to the principal or designee, media specialist, or teacher his/her concern regarding the usefulness and/or merits of materials;

If a patron wishes to challenge material, he/she must read/view the material in its entirety . At that time, a Request for Reconsideration of Materials should be completed and returned to the principal or designee;

After formal submission of a Request for Reconsideration of Materials, the course of action will be:

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the Request for Reevaluation of Materials , the principal or designee will transmit the request to the chair of the Materials Review Committee , who will notify the committee regarding the need to meet and the title of the material in questions. This will provide time for committee members to read/view the challenged material in question prior to the meeting;

The chair will call the meeting in a timely fashion;

Professional staff or sources may be asked to gather reviews of the material for committee use;

The material in question shall be pulled until after all hearings and a final determination has been made.

The committee will:

Read and/or examine and discuss the questioned material in its entirety. The material will be judged by the committee to determine its compatibility with the Criteria for Selection listed in the district's Materials Selection and Review Policy;

Read and discuss reviews of the work;

Examine concerns referenced on the Request Form point by point;

Weigh opposing viewpoints against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole in the context in which it is to be used, and not on individual passages;

Call upon district employees involved in selection of the material in question for input as needed;

Include other activities deemed by the committee to be relevant;

Attempt to reach a consensus. Otherwise, the committee will vote on the request to determine majority decision;

Recommend appropriate grade levels to be affected if the vote is for removal of material, and/or determine the appropriate grade levels affected by the decision; Transmit a written report including said vote to the principal or designee, patron, teacher and/or librarian involved. The committee chair will be responsible for the dissemination of this report to all interested parties;

Permit teachers who use materials being challenged to provide information to the committee for consideration;

The written decision of the committee will be forwarded to the superintendent, who will inform the Board of Education and the complainant of the committee's decision.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision, a request may be submitted to the superintendent requesting the Board Education or a sub-committee of the Board of Education to review all of the proceedings. The Board of Education will then render a final decision as to the appropriateness of the review process.

Request for Reconsideration

Submitted by

School Site Involved

Mailing Address

Phone Number

Representing: Self _____ Group Affiliation (if any) _____

Material in Question : Title

Author

Publisher Copyright Date

FORMAT: Book, Periodical, CD-ROM, Video, Other (Please Specify)

Please respond to the following questions. If you need more space, please attach additional pages

Did you read/hear/view the entire work? Yes No

If you did not read/hear/view the entire work, which part did you read/hear/view?

Specifically, what part of the information did you find objectionable, and why? Please cite page numbers, frames, CD-ROMs , etc.

Would you like to recommend this title for another age group? If so, include the age group.

Have you read the Eufaula School District's Materials Selection and Review Policy ? Yes No

How do you perceive students would be affected by exposure to this work?

What would you like to have done about this material? ____Do not assign it or lend it to my child ____Withdraw it from the school

____ Other (Please Specify)

What review of this material have you read?

What do you believe is the main idea or theme?

Are you aware of state requirements for schools to have materials available to teach the pluralistic nature of our society? Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Board Action taken Oct. 2, 2000, to approve Materials Selection and Review Policy

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising his/her critical judgment will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio, and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas of manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions :

It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighting and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know now only what we believe but why we believe it.

Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free men can flourish which draws up lists of writers to who it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudice of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The idea of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that each individual must be directed in making up his/her mind about the ideas he/she examines. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concept of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society each individual is free to determine for himself/herself what he/she wishes to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for his/her purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires all bookmen the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life but it is our.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953, by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publisher Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 15, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, by the ALA Council.

Adopted as a component of the Eufaula Public School District's Materials Selection and Review Policy Oct. 2, 2000

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.

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.

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.

Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.

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, by the ALA Council.

Adopted as a component of the Eufaula Public School District's Materials Selection and Review Policy Oct. 2, 2000