Instruction

Equipment, Books, and Materials

The CREC Council shall provide each school with the equipment, textbooks, and other learning materials necessary to meet the needs of instruction. Equipment, books, and materials for a learning area shall be selected by certified staff in that area.

All necessary school and art supplies are furnished to students. In the case of crafts and industrial art classes where projects are made, students may be required to pay the costs of materials.

Adoption of Primary Learning Materials

The review and selection of primary learning materials will be carried on continuously in order to remain current.

Where applicable all materials should present balanced views concerning the international, national and local issues and problems of the past, present, and future, and should:

1. Stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation and aesthetic and ethical values.
2. Help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
3. Develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
4. Provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, gender, or physical abilities.
5. Allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

Any textbook or learning material that will serve the function of a textbook must be processed through the schools primary learning material adoption procedure and formally adopted by the CREC Council. This applies to a textbook or material that will be used as a primary learning tool on an ongoing basis with the majority of students in a class, course, or learning group within a class.
Instruction

Equipment, Books, and Materials (continued)

Primary learning materials are textbooks, paperback books, audiovisual kits, or other instructional materials which are:

- used for the duration of a course or school year; the majority of assignments are derived from such material.
- used by all students in a class, course, or learning group within a class.

The administration will develop and maintain a procedure for selecting materials which meets the aforementioned criteria. Such procedure shall include the opportunity for professional staff to analyze, evaluate, and recommend primary learning materials for adoption.

Supplemental Materials

Supplemental learning materials are those books, audiovisual kits, and other instructional materials that instructional staff use to complement primary learning materials. The Executive Director shall ensure that each school has in place a plan for the professional review of all learning materials.

Challenged Instructional Materials

The principles of freedom to read and professional responsibility are basic to the selection of instructional materials. Occasional objections to materials selection will be made. The Request for Reconsideration of an Instructional Resource form must be completed by complainant. The procedure for processing challenges is as follows:

1. The person making the challenge shall, in writing, sign a statement of challenge and enumerate the reason(s) for complaint. (See form 6161 #2)

2. The written complaint shall be submitted to the immediate administrator responsible for authorizing the materials purchase (Principal, Assistant Director for CREC).

3. A school based team will review materials under question. The team shall consist of a building administrator and appropriate faculty. (See Guidelines 6161)

4. Values and faults shall be weighed and decision will be based on the materials as a whole and not on passages pulled out of context.
Instruction

Equipment, Books, and Materials (continued)

Challenged Instructional Materials (continued)

5. A report shall be written by the responsible administrator and submitted to the Executive Director and the complainant within thirty calendar days of the complaint.

6. Challenged instructional materials shall remain in use in the schools pending a final decision.

7. The regular appeal process if necessary will be followed.

Legal Reference

Connecticut General Statutes

10-221 Boards of Education to prescribe rules.

10-222a Boards to have use of funds derived from repayment for school materials.

10-228 Free textbooks, supplies, materials and equipment.

10-229 Change of textbooks.


Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81)

Policy adopted: June 18, 2003

CAPITOL REGION EDUCATION COUNCIL
Hartford, Connecticut
TEXTBOOK ADOPTION FORM

Date: ___________________

1. Curriculum committee or department submitting change: ___________________

2. Grade levels and high school course(s) in which text will be used: ________________

3. Proposed Text:
   a. Title: __________________________________________
   b. Author(s) full name: ________________________________
   c. Publisher (name and location): _______________________
   d. Copyright date: ___________________________________

4. Cost of recommended text: ___________________________________________

5. Amount budgeted: _________________________________________________

6. Number of student copies to be purchased: ____________________________

7. This text is (check one):

   a. A replacement for existing text
   b. A new text for new or revised course

8. Clarify how this text meets the selection guidelines in policy 6161(a) and the rationale for selection of this text (if replacement for current text, be sure to indicate why the text needs to be replaced and the advantages of the proposed text):

   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________

9. Department or committee members: ________________________________

10. Approvals: Department Head, District Coordinator or Coordinator:

    _______________________________________________________

    Signature
Citizen’s Request For Reconsideration Of
An Instructional Resource

Material in Question:______________________________________________________________

Request Initiated by:______________________________________________________________

Telephone:____________________________________________________________________

Address:______________________________________________________________________

Complainant represents:__________________________________________________________

____ himself _________________ organization (name) ___________________ identify other group

1. Did you examine the entire instructional material? ___________ What Portions?________

   ____________________________________________________________________________

2. With regard to this material, to what do you object? Why? Please be specific.

   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

3. Have you discussed your concerns with your child's teacher?_______________________
   Have you discussed your concerns with your school principal?_____________________
   Have you discussed your concerns with the Director of Instruction?_________________

4. What are you requesting that the Council do about this instructional material?

   ____________________________________________________________________________

5. In its place, what instructional material would you recommend that would convey a more
   valuable picture, perspective and comprehension of subject?

   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________          ____________________
Signature of Complainant        Date

Return this request to the Executive Director
Guidelines for Staff Reviewing Materials Under Reconsideration

Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to learn and to read and base your decision on these broad principles rather than on defense of individual materials. Freedom of inquiry is vital to education in a democracy.

Study thoroughly all materials referred to you and read available reviews. The general acceptance of the materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and local holdings in other schools.

Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based on the material as a whole.

Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, will be presented by the Principal to the complainant at the conclusion of our discussion of the questioned material.

Enclosed are checklists for fiction and nonfiction works which are to be used when reconsidering instructional materials.
Checklist for School Staff’s Reconsideration of Instructional Material - Fiction and Other Literary Forms (sample)

Title ____________________________________ Author ____________________________________

A. Purpose

1. What is the purpose, theme or message of the material? How well does the author/producer/composer accomplish this purpose?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

2. If the story is fantasy, is it the type that has imaginative appeal and is suitable for children? ___Yes ___No: for young adults? ___Yes ___No. If both are marked No, for what age group would you recommend?

3. Will the reading and/or viewing and/or listening to material result in more compassionate understanding of human beings? ___Yes ___No

4. Does it offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, and problems of various minority groups? ___Yes ___No

5. Are any questionable elements of the story an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message? ___Yes ___No

B. Content

1. Does a story about modern times give a realistic picture of life as it is now? ___Yes ___No

2. Does the story avoid an oversimplified view of life, one which leaves the reader with the general feeling that life is sweet and rosy or ugly and meaningless? ___Yes ___No

3. When factual information is part of the story, is it presented accurately? ___Yes ___No

4. Is prejudicial appeal readily identifiable by the potential reader? ___Yes ___No

5. Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of the potential readers? ___Yes ___No

6. Do the characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live? ___Yes ___No

7. Does the material offend in some special way the sensibilities of women or a minority group by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters? ___Yes ___No
Checklist for School Staff’s Reconsideration of Instructional Material - Fiction and Other Literary Forms (sample)

8. Is there preoccupation with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate for children? ___Yes ___No; young adults? ___Yes ___No

9. If there is use of offensive language, is it appropriate to the purpose of the text for children? ___Yes ___No; young adults? ___Yes ___No

10. Is the material free from derisive names and epithets that would offend minority groups? ___Yes ___No; children? ___Yes ___No; young adults? ___Yes ___No

11. Is the material well written or produced? ___Yes ___No

12. Does the story give a broader understanding of human behavior without stressing differences of class, race, color, sex, education, religion or philosophy in any adverse way? ___Yes ___No

13. Does the material make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas? ___Yes ___No

14. Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste? ___Yes ___No

15. Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story? ___Yes ___No

Additional comments:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Recommendation by School Media Advisory Committee for Treatment of Challenged Materials:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Date____________________
Signature of Media Advisory Review Committee
Checklist for School Staff's Reconsideration of Instructional Material - Nonfiction (sample)

Title __________________________________________________Author __________________

A. Purpose

1. What is the overall purpose of the material? ______________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
2. Is the purpose accomplished? ___Yes ___No

B. Authenticity

1. Is the author competent and qualified in the field? ___Yes ___No
2. What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field? ________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

C. Appropriateness

1. Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of District Schools? ___Yes ___No
2. Is it appropriate to the level of instruction intended? ___Yes ___No
3. Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels? ___Yes ___No

D. Content

1. Is the content of this material well presented by providing adequate scope, range, depth and continuity? ___Yes ___No
2. Does the material present information not otherwise available? ___Yes ___No
3. Does the material give a new dimension or direction to its subject? ___Yes ___No

E. Reviews

1. Source of review: _______________________________________________________
   Favorably received _______Unfavorably received _______
Checklist for School Staff’s Reconsideration of Instructional Material - Nonfiction (sample)

2. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids? ___Yes ___No
If answer is yes, please list titles of selection aids. ____________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Additional Comments:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Recommendation by School Media Advisory Committee for Treatment of Challenged Materials
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Date _____________________________________
Signature of Media Advisory Review Committee
____________________________________
____________________________________
Selection Policy For School Library Media Center Collections

School Library Media Specialists are responsible for the review, evaluation, and selection of the school library media collection. School Library Media Specialists work cooperatively with administrators and teachers to provide resources which represent diverse points of view, stimulate growth in thinking skills, and promote the overall educational program. Library media collections are developed to meet both curricular and personal needs. To ensure that these needs are met, Library Media Specialists apply selection criteria and use recommended selection tools. All purchases, including gifts, shall meet the same selection standards.

This selection policy reflects the philosophy and goals of the school system and supports the principles of intellectual freedom described in Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs, the Library Bill of Rights (ALA), Students' Right to Read (NCTE), and other statements on intellectual freedom from the American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians.

Selection Criteria for Library Media Materials

- **Appropriate for recommended levels**
  Library media materials shall be accessible to students of varied abilities, and meet informational and interest needs of students.

- **Pertinent to the curriculum and the objectives of the instructional program**
  Library media materials shall be selected on the basis of assessed curricular needs. Materials shall reflect the identified learning outcomes of the instructional program.

- **Accurate in terms of content**
  Library media materials shall present facts in an objective manner. Authority of the author, organization, publisher/producer shall be a consideration in selection. Materials concerning human development and family life shall contain facts which are presented in a manner appropriate to the level of the students.

- **Reflective of the pluralistic nature of a global society**
  Library media materials shall provide a global perspective and promote diversity as a positive attribute of our society. It is important to include materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures.

- **Free of bias and stereotype**
  Materials shall reflect the basic humanity of all people and be free of stereotypes, caricatures, distorted dialect, sexual bias, and other offensive characteristics. Library materials concerning religious, social, and political content shall inform rather than indoctrinate.
Representative of differing viewpoints on controversial subjects
Students have the right to information on both sides of a controversial issue. By having access to a variety of resources students will have the knowledge base to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. The school library media center provides free and equitable access to all information.

Appropriate format to effectively teach the curriculum
Library media materials shall be available in variety of formats, e.g., print, non-print, electronic, multimedia, to meet the needs and learning styles of a diverse student population.

Recent copyright date as appropriate to the subject
Library media materials shall be assessed for currency of the information as it relates to the content and purpose of the item.

Acceptable in literary style and technical quality
Literary quality, technical merit, physical arrangement, and aesthetic characteristics shall be considered as integral components in the evaluation of all media formats.

Cost effective in terms of use
Library media materials shall be evaluated for cost effectiveness in terms of accessibility, projected use, and durability.

Appropriate for students with special needs
Library media materials shall be provided to meet curricular needs and the individual needs, interests, and learning styles of all students at all levels.

Implementing the Selection Policy
The objective of the selection policy is to increase the awareness of educators of the many considerations one must apply when making decisions about information resources available to students and teachers. The proliferation of knowledge as characteristic of the “Information Age” brings with it many challenges. According to John Naisbitt, "We have for the first time an economy based on a key resource (information) that is not only renewable, but self generating. Running out of information is not a problem, but drowning in it is."

Library media specialists play a leadership role in communicating to the educational community the purpose and scope of the selection policy. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of library materials rests with the library media specialist who seeks faculty, student, and parent recommendations for purchase of library media materials. Favorable reviews from professional review journals and authoritative selection references shall be used when developing library media collections. Wherever possible, direct examination of materials is advisable to ensure that they meet selection criteria.
Essential Curriculum and Collection Development

The major emphasis of collection development shall be to provide materials which meet curricular needs. It is recommended that a copy of each curriculum guide be housed in the library media center. The library media specialist needs to be familiar with changes and additions to the curriculum and how they affect collection development.

Teacher Recommendations

Communication with teachers to assess curriculum needs and recommendations for purchase is an important part of the selection process. Since the library media collection is an integral part of the instructional and learning process, the strength and value of the collection are ensured when teachers are actively involved in the selection process. A sample form is included at the end of this document.

Student and Parent Recommendations

Suggestions from students and parents is also an important part of the selection process. As students seek information for curricular purposes or use the library media center for personal interests, students and parents are encouraged to make recommendations of specific resources or subject areas where information is needed. A sample form is included at the end of this document.

Professional Review Journals

The following professional review journals are some recommended selection tools:

- The Book Report
- Booklinks
- Booklist
- Bulletin of Center for Children's Books
- CD-ROM Professional
- Classroom Connect
- Horn Book
- Information Searcher
- Internet World
- Library Talk
- Multicultural Book Reviews for K-12 Educators
- School Library Journal
- School Library Media Activities Monthly
Core Collection Tools

Core collection tools are authoritative selection references to help assess the quality of the media collection and the availability of resources from various publishers/producers. Unlike review journals which are published monthly/bi-monthly, core collection references are updated annually.

- Children's Catalog
- Elementary School Library Collection
- Junior High School Catalog
- Senior High School Catalog

Vendor Catalogs

Publisher and jobber catalogs can be useful in preparing orders and determining the availability of materials. It is recommended that a Publisher & Producer file be kept only for those catalogs which are most useful and appropriate for the collection. Some catalogs list review sources, but they may not necessarily be positive ones. Also, some jobbers will prepare upon request subject specific bibliographies of materials, e.g., multicultural with reference to reviews. These lists can be used to facilitate preparation of purchase requisitions. The library media specialist shall keep in mind that these are marketing tools, not selection tools.

Considerations For Selection of Print Materials

There are general selection criteria which apply to all library media materials. The following media formats require additional considerations.

Books

Due to the high cost of materials, it is important to examine books with the following additional criteria in mind before purchasing:

- Illustrations and layout
- Type style and text density
- Paper quality
- Durability of bindings
- Readability and interests levels
- Indexing
Paperbacks

Paperbacks are an inexpensive way to supplement the library media collection for duplication of titles, in-depth studies, special projects, and leisure reading. It is recommended that first copies of picture books be hardcover.

When deciding whether to purchase paperback books or hardbound books consider the following:

- Curricular demand placed on these books in the individual school
- Use of these materials for research, independent reading, duplication of classics, and popular fiction
- Cost and use of paperback books as compared to the cost of hardback books

Periodicals

Periodicals support the curriculum and provide leisure reading for students. Professional review journals and library periodicals for instruction may be considered for purchase. Consider access to full text online periodical databases.

Newspapers

Newspapers may be ordered as needed. Consider access to full text online newspaper databases.

Pamphlets

Pamphlets that support the curriculum may be added to the collection. It is recommended that they be organized in an information file by subject rather than fully cataloged. Apply general selection criteria.

Reference

Reference materials in both print and electronic formats provide comprehensive information in both general and subject-specific areas. They also serve as access tools to information from other sources including school, public, academic, and electronic collections.

The following points need to be considered:

- Cost effective in terms of projected use
- Authority
- Arrangement and indexing
- User-friendly
Selection of Non-Print Instructional Materials

Considerations for Selection of Non-print Materials

The criteria for selection of non-print materials are essentially the same as for print materials. The quality of auditory and visual presentation shall be considered as well as accuracy of information and the appropriateness of format.

Non-print materials shall:

- Promote instructional goals and support the curriculum
- Provide a variety of media formats to meet the needs of the curriculum
- Present content in appropriate format and acceptable technical quality
- Avoid dense text and graphics

Considerations for Selection of Electronic Resources

The criteria for selection of electronic resources are essentially the same as for print materials. Electronic resources such as CD-ROM, computer software, and online services provide greater access to information. Availability of network versions and site license agreements may be a factor in selection.

Electronic resources shall:

- Provide learner control through flexible pacing, variable difficulty, and optimal branching and linking
- Information is accurate and reliably maintained
- Organization, searching capabilities, and navigation tools enhance information retrieval
- Provide record keeping and management options, if applicable
- Provide readable text, attractive graphics, and an appealing layout
- Have easy-to-understand, comprehensive documentation
- User friendly

Collection Development

The school library media program is an integral part of the instructional process. As part of the instructional process, the collection development is based upon the belief that all students, teachers, administrators, and support staff shall have open access to all forms of information relevant to learning and teaching the curriculum. To ensure access to quality library media collections, a systematic process for assessing and building library media collections is essential.
Collection development is the ongoing process of identifying strengths and weaknesses of library media collections in terms of student needs. Collection development demonstrates that funds are being spent wisely and that library media collections meet the informational needs of the curriculum as well as independent reading and viewing needs of students. The three components involved in the collection development process are:

**Analysis of the School Community**

In order to be responsive to the unique needs of each school, a collection development process must be based upon an analysis of student needs at that particular school. There will be some similarities among library media collections across the system, but the profile provided by this analysis will ensure that the specific needs of each school are addressed.

**Assessment of the Library Media Collection**

Collection assessment is needed to determine the quality of the existing library media collection. It is an organized method for collecting statistics on the age of the collection, the number of titles in the collection, and the ability of the collection to meet curricular needs.

**Selection and Acquisition of Materials**

The selection and acquisition of new library media materials will be based upon the needs of each library media center as determined by the collection assessment process and upon the availability of funding. The Board policy shall be followed when selecting all library media materials.

**Assessment and Inventory Process**

An essential step in collection development is assessment of the needs of the curriculum and student population with regard to library media resources. Library media specialists will develop yearly and long-range plans to assist in ongoing assessment.

Assessment of the collection includes taking inventory of existing materials, assessing materials in relation to needs of instructional units, and weeding outdated and inappropriate materials.

The inventory is a process by which holdings are checked against the conventional or automated cataloging system and the actual item to determine if the resource is still part of the collection and still meets selection criteria. The objective of this inventory is to ensure that the cataloging system accurately reflects the collection which is the key access point for students and teachers to locate information within the library. This procedure shall not disrupt the library media program. Some library media specialists may prefer to complete an inventory annually; others may prefer to use a two or three-year cycle.
Consideration File

Library media specialists shall maintain a Consideration File for future purchases. This file shall reflect school needs, staff recommendations, and reviews. Create a database to input ordering information for resources which are recommended for purchase and to output a list of resources to order. Some suggested database fields are: Title, author, publisher, copyright, review source, price.
Deselection (Weeding) Policy For School Library Media Center Collections

Weeding of Materials

The Public Schools maintains an active policy of withdrawal based on the elimination of outdated material, books no longer of interest or in demand, duplicates, and worn or mutilated copies. Frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer and more valid materials are of prime consideration. Local history, genealogy, and material of local industry are an exception. Fiction, once popular, but no longer in demand, is discarded as are nonfiction books which were purchased to meet demands no longer existing.

Systematic weeding of the collection is required of every Library Media Specialist in order to keep the collection responsive to patrons' needs, to insure its vitality and usefulness to the school community, and to make room for newer materials. Weeding identifies damaged items, ephemeral materials which are no longer used, out-of-date materials, and extra copies which are not being used. Weeding also helps the Library Media Specialist evaluate the collection by identifying areas or titles where additional materials are needed, older editions that need to be updated, and subjects, titles, or authors that are no longer of interest to the community. If a Library Media Specialist is uncertain about a title to be withdrawn, standard bibliographic tools in the subject will be consulted to see if the title has historical or literary value.

Guidelines

- **Record of use:** has the item circulated in the past five years? Shelf-time periods (or the length of time an item remains on the shelf between circulations) can reflect a declining or non-existent pattern of use. Remember that seasonal, monthly or some similar patterns of use exist in school libraries and these patterns must be taken into consideration when establishing shelf-time and cut-off periods for weeding. Many consider the shelf-period criterion to be accurate, valid, and by far the best since it does not reduce circulation.

- **Currency of content:** Is the subject matter out-of-date, factually inaccurate, or no longer relevant to the educational program? Are illustrations outmoded; or do they perpetuate sexual, racial, or cultural stereotypes? Has the material been superseded by better or more up-to-date materials, even though it is only a year or two old? Has the curriculum changed to the point where the material is no longer pertinent? Is it obsolete in content, style, or theme? Is the approach no longer appropriate (word choice and style of writing of a generation or two ago leave today's youngsters guessing instead of helping them to understand)?

- **Technical quality:** in non-print materials, are visuals poor, faded, off color, or scratched; if black and white, have they been superseded by a clear color edition? Are sound reproductions faulty or inferior?
• Physical condition: is it worn, torn, soiled, or generally ragged? Are pages or parts missing? Do the pages have very fine print or yellowed paper? Classics with such make-up have no place on school library shelves. Weigh the cost of repairing and rebinding against the cost of replacement. Better no mending than poor mending as any mending takes time and care, plus supplies.

• Dispensability: is it a duplicate copy? Does it duplicate materials no longer needed in the collection? If a textbook, is it no longer useful for reference?

To indicate when an item should be removed from the collection, use the acronym MUSTY:

- M Misleading and/or factually inaccurate
- U Ugly-worn, and beyond mending or rebinding
- S Superseded by a truly NEW edition or by a much better book
- T Trivial-of no discernible literary or scientific value
- Y Your collection has no use for this material, irrelevant to the needs of your community

• What not to weed. There are also valid reasons for NOT discarding materials even if the above criteria are met.

- It is a work of historical significance in the field of children's literature.
- It has unusual illustrations, or illustrations done by a well-known artist.
- It is a work by a local author, illustrator, or editor
- It describes local history or personalities.
- It is a memorial gift.
- It bears a significant relationship to other materials on the same subject.
- There is little or no money available for more satisfactory titles.
- It has possible usefulness to some special group or individual in the school.