

All types of materials for Westford Public Schools libraries shall be recommended for purchase by the professional personnel of the libraries. Consultation may take place with the administration, consultative staff, faculty, and students.

The Westford Public Schools libraries endorse the American Library Association Bill of Rights and assert that the responsibility of a school library is:

1. To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and personal needs of the users, taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and gender equity.
2. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that users may develop, with guidance, the practice of critical analysis.
5. To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our heritage.
6. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive media collection appropriate for the users.

Selection of Materials

While selection of materials involves many people, including library media specialists, teachers, students, supervisors, administrators, and community persons, the responsibility for coordinating and recommending the selection and purchasing of materials rests with the certified library media person. All materials selected shall support stated objectives of school library service, be consistent with stated principles of selection, and meet stated specific selection criteria.

Gift materials should be judged by the same criteria used for the purchase of new materials and should be accepted or rejected on the basis of those criteria. Gifts to the library may be accepted only with the understanding that the disposition of such gifts becomes the prerogative of the School Committee.

In order to always provide a current, highly usable collection of materials in every library, librarians shall provide for constant and continuing renewal of the collection, not only by the addition of up-to-date materials, but by the judicious elimination of materials which no longer meet the needs of the library.

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

P6118
Page 2 of 2

Challenged Material

A procedure for processing and responding to criticisms of approved materials shall be established and followed. This procedure shall include a formal, signed complaint and a committee appointed by the Principal to re-evaluate the material in question. Virtually all material that is challenged usually belongs, but is not limited to one of three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity-obscenity. School Committee policy regarding these areas is as follows:

- a. Religion - Factual, unbiased material that represents all major religions shall be included in the library collection.
- b. Ideologies - The libraries shall, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available basic primary and factual material and information on the level of their reading public, on any ideology of philosophy of government which exerts or has exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education, or any phase of life.
- c. Profanity/obscenity - Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality by the librarian and teachers who will take into consideration their reading public and community standards of morality.

In all cases, the decision shall be made on the basis of whether the material presents life in its true proportions, whether circumstances are realistically dealt with, and whether the book has literary or social value.

The final decision on selection and adoption rests with the Superintendent.

Massachusetts General Law References:

- M.G.L. 71:37 – School Committee; Powers and Duties
- M.G.L. 71:38G – Definitions; Provisional Educator; Provisional Educator with Advanced Standing and Standard Educator Certificates

Westford Public Schools Policy References:

- P1505 – Public Complaints About Curriculum or Instructional Materials
- P3405 – Gifts and Contributions to Schools
- P6301 – District Computing Environment
- P6302 – District Acceptable Internet Use

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Policy Revised:

WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Westford, Massachusetts 01886