

MINNETONKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy #606: INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL REVIEW, SELECTION AND USE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for the review, selection and use of textbooks, supplemental books, and other instructional materials.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The District's curriculum focuses instructional practices on challenging and supporting all students in the pursuit of their highest personal and academic achievement. In order to achieve world-class levels of learning, the School Board insists that appropriate and high quality instructional materials be used to deliver the adopted curriculum. All instructional materials, whether core or supplemental, must align with and advance the District's Vision and Mission, and support the District's standards and curriculum. Instructional materials shall challenge each student and prepare them to thrive in American society and the world at-large.

The School Board recognizes that selection of textbooks and instructional materials is a vital component of the District's curriculum. The Board also recognizes that it has the authority to make final decisions on selection of all textbooks and instructional materials.

III. RESPONSIBILITY OF SELECTION

- A. While the Board retains its authority to make final decisions on the selection of textbooks and instructional materials, the Board recognizes the expertise of the professional staff and the vital need of such staff to be primarily involved in the recommendation of textbooks and instructional materials. Accordingly, the Board delegates to the Superintendent the responsibility to direct the professional staff in formulating recommendations to the Board on textbooks and other instructional materials.
- B. In reviewing textbooks and instructional materials during the selection process, the professional staff shall select materials which:
 - 1. support the goals and objectives of the education programs;
 - 2. consider the needs, age, and maturity of students;
 - 3. foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity, multiple perspectives, constructive discourse and varied opinion;

4. fit within the constraints of the school district budget;
5. are in the English language. Another language may be used, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 124D.61;
6. permit grade-level instruction for students to read and study America's founding documents, including documents that contributed to the foundation or maintenance of America's representative form of limited government, the Bill of Rights, our free-market economic system, and patriotism;
7. do not censor or restrain instruction in American or Minnesota state history or heritage based on religious references in original source documents, writings, speeches, proclamations, or records; and
8. include multiple points-of-view that reflect the background of students in the District's schools.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Instructional materials are defined as those items that are read, listened to, viewed, manipulated, or experienced by students as part of the instructional process. They may be consumable or non-consumable and may vary greatly in the kind of student response they stimulate. Instructional materials include, but are not limited to: textbooks, supplementary books, teacher manuals, kits, games, computer software, electronic information sources, apparatus, media collections, and other print and non-print materials.

Curriculum: a written plan including standards, benchmarks, essential questions, an assessment plan, instructional resources and strategies, and time allocations for emphasis and pacing for the content to be taught.

Instruction: a teacher-led process, which transforms well-planned curriculum into student learning. Instruction is standards-focused teaching for the purpose of providing meaningful learning experiences that enable all students to master academic content and achieve personal goals, and are subject to the guidance and evaluation of the principal.

Assessments: multiple tools used to gather information about the student's performance on the standards taught.

Evaluation: the process of making judgments about the level of students' understanding or performance.

Standard: a statement of what the student will be able to know, understand and do.

Benchmark: a clear, specific description of knowledge or skills the student should acquire by a particular point in the student's schooling.

Core Instructional Materials: Resources that are part of the District's standards and curriculum adoptions which are approved by the Board for district-wide use as the primary means to assist students in attaining expected learning outcomes. These materials should be comprehensive enough to enable teachers to primarily use this resource in most instruction.

Instructional Materials Review Process: A formal process conducted on a regular schedule where District curriculum and materials are reviewed, evaluated, and proposed based upon District criteria.

Informal Review Process: A process that occurs in years where the Materials Review Process will not occur or when educational needs dictate an immediate expedited approval process.

Supplementary Materials:

- Resources that are selected to complement, enrich and/or extend the curriculum and provide enrichment opportunities to expand students' interests and contribute to their lifelong learning. Examples include local school library collections, District video collections, licensed databases, resource center collections, teacher-selected resources for individual classes, and student resource lists.
- All Supplementary Materials, however, must be selected for the purpose of supporting the standards and curriculum of the given course or class and must be compatible with the District's Vision, goals and expectations.
- Many valuable materials become available continually, and the Board recognizes that extensive processes for approval of evolving materials would be cumbersome and not in students' best interests in some cases; therefore the Board allows teachers to use materials that have not been approved by the Board but fit all of the criteria for selection of materials that have been approved by the Board. If the material is intended to be required reading for all students in the class, approval shall be required by the principal. The materials so identified and used, if intended to be used more than one time, will be subsequently submitted to the principal for submission to the Superintendent, who will inform the Board and periodically request approval of such materials.
- The Board further recognizes that many valuable resources to supplement student learning can be found on the Internet, in periodicals and pamphlets, and in other non-published formats, and permission to use such resources is extended to teachers and building administrators without seeking Board approval; however, it is fully expected that teachers using such sources of materials will use their professional judgment in their selections. It is advisable for teachers to consult with the principal if they have doubt about the appropriateness of the material.

Differentiation: the process teachers use to plan learning experiences, which intentionally respond to learner differences and backgrounds. Students would have opportunities to work at their levels of readiness (assessed levels of skills and knowledge), in preferred and varied learning modes/styles, and engage their interests in order to achieve curricular goals.

V. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Board is accountable for selection of instructional materials, and as a policy-making body, assigns responsibility to the professional staff, as follows:

- A. The Superintendent, or designee, shall be responsible for an instructional materials review process, and an informal review process, as well as submitting recommendations to the Board for adoption of materials. The Superintendent's final recommendation for materials selection shall be consistent with the District's Standards and Curriculum. This process shall comply with Board policies, as well as federal and state law and rules. Core Instructional Materials are provided in multiple copies (hard copies or electronic versions) for use by an entire class or a major segment of a class. Supplementary materials that are identified during the curriculum review process, including books and videos, should be recommended through a separate formal District process from Core materials, established by the Superintendent and approved by the Board. There is also an opportunity for teachers to use materials that have not been approved by the Board. The materials so identified and used by teachers that require subsequent approval by the Board will be submitted to the principal for forwarding to the Superintendent, who will inform the Board and periodically request approval of such materials. The Superintendent shall assure that use of materials not required to be approved by the Board are monitored for consistency with the standards and curriculum adopted and appropriateness.
- B. Principals are responsible for assuring that materials are being used in classroom instruction in accordance with the District's Standards and Curriculum. Supplementary Materials selected from the approved list at the school or classroom level must meet all criteria for selection referenced in Section V of this policy. The uses of approved Supplementary Materials are determined by teachers and administrators. As noted above, the Board allows teachers to use materials that have not been approved by the Board but require subsequent approval by the Board if intended to be used more than once. The materials so identified and used must be submitted to the principal, who will submit them to the Superintendent. The principal shall inform teachers when their materials have received Board approval. Furthermore, the Board also allows teachers to use Internet sources, periodicals, pamphlets and other non-published formats without Board approval, but it is expected that teachers will consult the respective building principal regarding the source of such materials if they are controversial or questionable. The principal shall monitor the use of such resources and relate concerns to teachers.

- C. Teachers are responsible for participating in and providing input to the Instructional Materials review and selection process. Once materials are adopted, teachers must understand the content and application of these materials and use the materials to ensure learning. The selection of Core and Supplementary materials will involve the active participation of teachers in the respective subject area being reviewed. It is expected that teachers using any Supplementary Material either approved by the Board or not approved by the Board will read the material in its entirety. The Board encourages teachers and administrators to use a rich assortment of Supplementary Materials to enable students to access current research, information about changing events and learning opportunities that cannot be fully accomplished through the use of Core Instructional Materials alone. Similar to the selection of Core materials, all Supplementary Materials must be selected for the purpose of supporting the standards and curriculum of the given course or class and must be compatible with the District's Vision, goals and expectations. The uses of approved Supplementary Materials are determined by teachers and administrators. As noted above, the Board allows teachers to use materials that have not been approved by the Board, and the teacher must submit the material to the principal for Board approval if it is intended to be used more than once. Furthermore, the Board also allows teachers to use Internet sources, periodicals, pamphlets and other non-published formats without Board approval, but it is expected that teachers will consult the respective building principal regarding the source of such materials if the teacher believes the material is controversial or questionable.
- D. Teaching and Learning staff are responsible for facilitating the entire process of the Instructional Materials review and selection and working closely with the various committees to assure that materials selected are comprehensive and flexible. They are responsible for providing opportunities to parents and students to review and give input on text/material evaluations. They assure the various steps of this policy are fulfilled. Once materials are adopted, Teaching and Learning staff are responsible for providing effective staff development so that all teachers can successfully implement and differentiate new instructional materials.

VI. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Professional staff shall evaluate instructional materials based on the Minnetonka School District Vision, state and federal requirements, Minnetonka Academic Standards, and grade-to-grade connectivity. Once materials have met these threshold criteria, then staff shall consider the materials based on the following criteria:

- A. Be appropriate for the age, social development, and maturity of the users. There should be specific designation of the grade levels and courses for which materials have been approved.
- B. Meet the interests, abilities, learning styles, and differentiated needs of the users.
- C. Consider the needs of the diversity of ethnic, political, cultural, and religious values held by the Minnetonka community and the pluralistic society at large.

- D. Support areas of lifetime success, such as academics, character, physical and mental health, leadership, and service.
- E. Recognize various points-of-view, including those considered by some to be controversial.
- F. Foster information literacy and enhance student learning through technology.
- G. Illustrate the contributions made by various groups to our national heritage and the world.
- H. Stimulate growth in factual knowledge and critical thinking.
- I. Recognize reading and writing as a foundation in all content areas.
- J. Provide support for meaningful assessment and progress measures.
- K. Strive to be free from bias, errors, and omissions.

VII. PROCESS FOR SELECTION

The Superintendent, or designee, will develop administrative guidelines to establish an orderly process for the Instructional Materials review process and selection of textbooks and instructional materials and will provide a consistent format for presentation of the recommendations to the Board. Committees established by the Superintendent, or designee, shall be representative of the content areas under consideration and include teachers from all grade levels and schools involved in implementing the eventual content, parents representing various schools using the materials, and representative administrators who will assure implementation of the materials. Such guidelines shall provide opportunity for involvement of professional staff and for input and consideration of views by parents and students. These guidelines will be coordinated with the Program Improvement Process and Cycle and with approved curriculum development. A complete recommendation must show evidence of meeting the following:

- meets local, state and federal standards,
- facilitates learning connectivity from grade to grade and subject-to-subject articulation,
- facilitates differentiation for both students and teachers,
- provides meaningful assessments and progress measures,
- facilitates development of sustainable work plans for teachers' delivery of curriculum,
- details "total cost of ownership" which includes purchase price of materials, as well as training costs, all subscriptions, enrichment materials, renewal fees, and a timeline for implementation,
- provides evidence of thorough assessment of alternatives, and

- provides research indicating effectiveness of chosen material in delivering academic results for a wide variety of students.

The District shall annually inform staff, parents, students and the public of which areas are under review and how interested parties may become involved.

The Superintendent, or designee, shall present recommendations to the Board on selection of new materials after completion of the process as outlined in this policy.

Selection of materials is an on-going process. Materials will be replaced which are no longer appropriate, fail to meet the above criteria, or have been lost or damaged.

VIII. SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. The Superintendent shall be responsible for keeping the Board informed of progress on the part of staff and others involved in the textbook and other instructional materials review and selection process.
- B. The Superintendent shall present a recommendation to the Board on the selection of textbooks and other instructional materials after completion of the review process as outlined in this policy.

IX. RECONSIDERATION OF TEXTBOOKS OR OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. The Board recognizes differences of opinion on the part of some members of the school district community relating to certain areas of the instruction program. Interested persons may request an opportunity to review materials and submit a request for reconsideration of the use of certain textbooks or instructional materials.
- B. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the development of guidelines and procedures to identify the steps to be followed to seek reconsideration of textbooks or other instructional materials.
- C. The Superintendent shall present a procedure to the Board for review and approval regarding reconsideration of textbooks or other instructional materials. When approved by the Board, such procedure shall be an addendum to this policy.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. 123B.02, Subd. 2 (General Powers of School Districts)

Minn. Stat. 123B.09, Subd. 8 (School Board Responsibilities)

Cross References:

Policy 601: District Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Policy 603: Instructional and Curricular Program Review and Improvement

Policy 604: Inclusive Education Program

Policy 607: Controversial Topics and Materials—and the School Program

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