

Media Center Philosophy and Goals

Martin County School District Library Media program plays an integral role in educating students for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. The Library Media program is a part of the total educational team which prepares students to be responsible citizens in today's information age.

This collection development policy has been established to determine criteria for selecting materials to ensure that all instructional materials extend the knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. 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. To ensure these goals are met, library media specialists apply selection criteria and use recommended selection tools. All acquisitions, including donations, should meet the same selection standards.

This policy reflects the philosophy and goals of the school system and supports the principles of information literacy and intellectual freedom described in *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* (Appendix A), the *Library Bill of Rights* (Appendix B), *The Freedom to Read Statement* (Appendix C), and other position statements on intellectual freedom for the American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians. Martin County Public Schools complies with federal laws regarding Internet safety and protection by requiring a filtering proxy server on its wide area network.

The Library Media Program will:

- Encourage the love of reading and lifelong learning
- Provide maximum access to library media center resources, facilities & services
- Support the instructional program by strengthening curriculum integration and information literacy
- Build community connections with public libraries and other sources of information
- Promote parent, school and community partnerships
- Recognize and respect the diversity and uniqueness of all people

Scope of the Collection

The collection will contain a balanced, wide variety of print and non-print materials which reflect diverse points of view on current and historical issues, and are appropriate for different ability levels and learning styles. The Library Media Center shall maintain sufficient resources to satisfy both curricular needs and personal interests of all members of the educational community.

The following considerations will guide media specialists in determining the scope of each school collection with professional regard for standardized collection guidelines and the unique personality of each school site.

- Curricular, recreational, and instructional material needs of students and teachers
- Age of students who normally would be expected to have access to the material
- Materials that will help students develop critical thinking skills & aesthetic appreciation
- Resources of varying levels of difficulty, diversity of appeal, & presentation of different points of view

Selection of Materials

Selection of materials is a continual process led by the library media specialist and involving other members of the learning community. The library media specialist will consult current, recognized professional selection tools. (Appendix D) The library media specialist will maintain a consideration file for future purchases. This file should reflect school needs, staff recommendations, and professional reviews.

Criteria used to evaluate and select instructional and educational materials:

- Pertinent to the curriculum and objectives of instructional program
- Appropriate for recommended levels in terms of readability and interest
- Accuracy of content
- Literary merit
- Recent copyright date as appropriate to the subject
- Free of bias and stereotype
- Scope
- Authority
- Special features
- Arrangement
- Technical quality
- Aesthetic quality
- Cost effective in terms of use
- Durability
- Reflective of the pluralistic nature of a global society
- Appropriate for students with special needs
- Translation integrity

These criteria will apply to and include all print, nonprint and electronic media.

Materials Acquisition

The library media specialist is responsible for entering requisitions online and arranging purchases via purchase order or P-card. Procedures for all purchasing are in compliance with Martin County Schools purchasing guidelines. See the following site:

http://www.martinschools.org/pages/Martin_County_School_District/General_Info/Department_Groups/Purchasing_And_Warehousing

Funding for a library media program needs to be viable and consistent to ensure a quality collection and equipment to facilitate services which meet the needs of the learning community. Financial allocations must also serve to meet SAC accreditation standards. There are a variety of funding sources.

- Library funds allocated by the district (primary funding source for media center)
- Principal's Discretionary Funds
- School Advisory Council Funds
- Internal School Library Funds
- Grants
- Donations from community/businesses
- Other state and federal monies

Maximizing Access

Library media specialists are responsible for developing ways to incorporate new materials as well as technology/equipment into the collection. The library media specialist shall:

- Publicize diversity of resources
- Maximize search capabilities for users of the electronic catalogue
- Provide accessibility for all users

Collection Maintenance

Inventory

An inventory of each school media center collection will be conducted annually. The inventory will yield the following benefits to the media program and the professional staff:

- Reconciliation of the catalog and shelf list
- Knowledge of the collection
- Analysis of patterns of usage
- Analysis of patterns of missing materials
- Preparation for weeding

Weeding Library Media Materials

The process of weeding is a key part of assessing the collection. It helps keep collections relevant, accurate, and useful; and it facilitates more effective use of space in the library media center.

Library media materials should be weeded if they:

- Are in poor physical condition
- Are outdated in content, use, or accuracy (Copyright date should be considered; however, decisions to weed should not be based solely on the copyright date of the material. Some older materials may be considered classic or may be of great historical value to your collection.)
- Are biased or portray stereotypes
- Are inappropriate in reading level
- Duplicate information which is no longer in heavy demand
- Are superseded by new or revised information
- Have outdated or unattractive format, design, graphics, or illustrations

Reconsideration of Materials

Occasional objections to instructional materials will be made despite the quality of the selection process; therefore, the following procedure for handling reconsideration of challenged materials has been established.

Procedure for handling complaints:

No duly selected materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the school except upon the recommendation of a reconsideration committee, with the concurrence of the Superintendent or, upon the Superintendent's recommendation, the concurrence of the Board of Education, or upon formal action of the Board of Education when a recommendation of a reconsideration committee is appealed to it.

Procedures to be observed:

- All complaints to staff members shall be reported to the building principal involved, whether received by telephone, letter, or in personal conversation.
- The principal shall contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve it informally by explaining the philosophy and goals of the school district and/or the library media center. (Appendix E)
- If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant shall be supplied with a packet of materials consisting of the materials selection policy statement and the procedure for handling objections. This packet also will include a standard printed form,

which shall be completed and returned before consideration will be given to the complaint. (Appendix F)

- If the formal request for reconsideration has not been received by the principal within two weeks, it shall be considered closed. If the request is returned, the reasons for selection of the specific work shall be reestablished by the appropriate staff.
- In accordance with statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child (or children) of the parents making the complaint if they so desire.
- Upon receipt of a completed objection form, the principal will refer the complaint to the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services. The Assistant Superintendent shall convene a committee of five to consider the complaint. This committee shall consist of the Coordinator of Instructional Technology and these people from the school involved: the principal, the library media specialist, a teacher, and a PTA representative.
- The committee shall meet to discuss the materials, following the guidelines set forth in Instructions to Reconsideration Committee (Appendix G), and shall prepare a report on the material containing its recommendations on disposition of the matter. The committee's recommendation will be sent to the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services for his/her endorsement and forwarded to the Superintendent, or his/her designee, for his/her decision.
- The Coordinator of Instructional Technology shall notify the complainant of the decision. In answering the complaint, the Coordinator shall explain the book selection system, give the guidelines used for selection, and cite authorities used in reaching decisions. If the committee decides to keep the work that caused the complaint, the complainant shall be given an explanation. If the complaint is valid, the principal will acknowledge it and make recommended changes.

If the complainant is still not satisfied, he or she may ask the Superintendent to present an appeal to the Board of Education, which shall make the final determination on the issue. The Board of Education may seek assistance from outside organizations such as the American Library Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, etc., in making its determination.

Appendices (attached)

Appendix A – Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning

Appendix B - Library Bill of Rights

Appendix C – The Freedom to Read Statement

Appendix D - List of Recommended Selection Tools

Appendix E - Sample Letter to Complainant

Appendix F – Form 167 Request for Reconsideration of Media Center Resources

Appendix G - Instructions to Reconsideration Committee

Appendix A

Information Literacy Standards

Information Literacy

- Standard 1: The student who is information literate accesses information efficiently and effectively.
- Standard 2: The student who is information literate evaluates information critically and competently.
- Standard 3: The student who is information literate uses information accurately and creatively.

Independent Learning

- Standard 4: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and pursues information related to personal interests.
- Standard 5: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information.
- Standard 6: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation.

Social Responsibility

- Standard 7: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and recognizes the importance of information to a democratic society.
- Standard 8: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and practices ethical behavior in regard to information and information technology.
- Standard 9: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information.

Appendix B

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.

I. 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.

II. 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.

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

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

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

VI. 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, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

Appendix C

The Freedom to Read Statement

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 or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, 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 counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. 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.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. 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 or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. 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 a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that 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 toward 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:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by 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 weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation 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 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.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

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 people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. 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 expression 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 values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. 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; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish 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. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. 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, they 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 the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's 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 the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans 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 the written word. We do so because we believe that it is 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 ours.

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

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
The Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

Appendix D

Professional Selection Tools

All materials should be evaluated prior to purchase. The media specialist should consult professional evaluation sources to select print and non-print resources. Whenever possible, materials should also be examined directly. Following is a list of reputable sources for reviews and bibliographies of recommended materials.

Professional journals for reviews of new resources

<i>Book Links</i>	<i>Booklist</i>
<i>Bulletin for the Center for Children's Books</i>	<i>Horn Book</i>
<i>Kirkus Reviews</i>	<i>Reading Teacher</i>
<i>School Library Journal</i>	<i>Voices of Youth Advocates</i>

Evaluation guides to basic collections

Elementary School Library Media Collection (Brodart)
Children's Catalog, Middle & Jr. High School Library Catalog
Senior High School Library Catalog
Fiction Catalog (H. W. Wilson)
Books for Secondary School Libraries (R. R. Bowker)

Evaluation guides for special collections

Magazines for Children: A Guide for Parent, Teachers, & Librarians
Magazines for Libraries (R. R. Bowker)
Encyclopedia Buying Guide (R. R. Bowker)
Guide to Reference Books (ALA)
Guide to Reference Books for School Media Centers (Libraries Unlimited)
Reference Books for Small & Medium Sized Libraries (ALA)
Reference Books for Children (Scarecrow Press)
Reference Books for Young Readers (R. R. Bowker)
A V Market Place (R. R. Bowker)
Bowker's Complete Video Directory (R. R. Bowker)
Educational Software Preview Guide (ISTE)
The Educational Software Selector (TESS)

Recommended lists from professional societies

American Library Assoc. ~ <http://www.ala.org>

American Assoc. of School Librarians ~ <http://www.ala.org/aasl/>

Assoc. for Educational Communications & Technology ~ <http://www.aect.org>

Nat'l Council for Geographic Ed. ~ <http://www.ncge.org/>

Nat'l Council for Social Studies ~ <http://www.socialstudies.org/>

Nat'l Council for Teachers of Mathematics ~ <http://www.nctm.org/>

Nat'l Council for Teachers of English ~ <http://www.ncte.org/>

National Science Teachers Assoc. ~ <http://www.nsta.org>

Appendix E

Sample Letter to Complainant

Date

Dear _____,

We appreciate your concern over the use of _____ at _____ School. We have developed procedures for selecting materials, but realize that not everyone will agree with every selection made.

To help you understand the selection process, we are sending a copy of the SBMC Media Collection Development Policy.

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the enclosed Request for Reconsideration of Instructional or Library Materials form and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request. If I have not heard from you within two weeks from the date of this letter, I will assume you no longer wish to file a formal complaint.

Sincerely,

Principal, _____ School

Appendix F

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL/LIBRARY MATERIALS

Title: _____

Type of Media : Book [] eBook [] Periodical [] Video/DVD [] Audio Recording [] Other []

Author/Producer: _____

Request Initiated By: _____
Name/Title

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

1. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages or section) _____

2. What do you feel might be the result of using this material? _____

3. For what age group would you recommend this material? _____

4. In your opinion, is there anything worthwhile in this material? _____

5. Did you read, view, or hear this material in its entirety? _____ If not, what parts? _____

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by literary/educational critics? _____

7. What do you believe is the theme of this material? _____

8. What action would you like the school to take regarding this material?

- ___ Do not assign this material to my child
- ___ Withdraw it from the entire student body
- ___ Send it to a committee for reconsideration

9. Can you recommend material of equal literary/instructional quality on the same subject? _____

Appendix G

Instructions to Reconsideration Committee

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 an essential ingredient of education in a democracy and part of the public school philosophy.

Read thoroughly all materials referred to you, including: the SBMC Media Collection Development Policy, available reviews of the challenged material, and the full text of the challenged material. Passages or parts should not be pulled out of context. The general acceptance of the material should be checked by consulting standard evaluation sources and local holdings in other schools.

The strengths and weaknesses of the material should be weighed against each other and the committee's opinion based on the material as a whole. Particular consideration should be given to the value of the material in supporting instructional goals and objectives.

A report detailing your decision will be presented by the Coordinator of Instructional Technology to the complainant at the conclusion of your discussion. Further, the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services will send a formal report and recommendation regarding the challenged material to the Superintendent of Martin County Schools.