

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY

INFORMATIONAL BOARD REPORT

RECOMMENDATION ON NEW

BOARD POLICY

04-0024-000

EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY MATERIALS

DECEMBER 2, 2024

Background Information:

The Board maintains various policies of the Harford County Public Schools. These policies are either required by federal and state law and regulation, or are, in the Board's judgment necessary and appropriate for the school system to operate in a lawful, appropriate, and effective manner.

Discussion:

The Board Policy Review Committee, under the guidance of Kimberly H. Neal, Esquire, General Counsel for Harford County Public Schools, has worked closely with Dr. Martha Barwick, Supervisor of Innovation in Learning, to draft a Board policy entitled Evaluation and Selection of School Library Materials. This policy will affirm the commitment of Harford County Public Schools to follow the guidance and expectations set by the Maryland State Department of Education as well as applicable laws concerning the selection and approval of school library media materials.

The draft policy was brought before the Board's Policy Review Committee for review at its October meeting.

Attachments:

1. Proposed New Board Policy 04-0024-000 Evaluation and Selection of School Library Materials.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

For the foregoing reasons, the Superintendent recommends the following:

1. That the Board review for possible approval at a future meeting the proposed new policy entitled 04-0024-000 Evaluation and Selection of School Library Materials.

POLICY TITLE: EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY MATERIALS		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED:	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED:
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: INSTRUCTION		

A. Policy Purpose

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.05.04.02, *et seq.*) and the Maryland State Standards for School Library Media Programs specify that students and staff shall have access to “appropriate materials and technologies to support the instructional programs of the local school system.” The purpose of this policy is to affirm the commitment of Harford County Public Schools (“HCPS”) to follow guidance and expectations set by the Maryland State Department of Education (“MSDE”) as well as applicable laws concerning the implementation of a unified school media library program and the selection and approval of library media materials. The purpose of this policy is also to affirm HCPS’s commitment to adherence to its procedure regarding Evaluation and Selection of School Library Materials, available at https://www.hcps.org/departments/docs/Curriculum/LibraryMedia/Procedure_Evaluation_and_Selection_of_School_Library_Materials.pdf

B. Policy Statement

1. HCPS recognizes that library media instruction is an essential part of students’ K-12 educational experience. School library media programs provide all students and staff members with equal and timely access to ideas and information.
2. HCPS is committed to the success and achievement of every student which means providing students with equitable access to high quality, culturally relevant instruction, curriculum, academic support, and extracurricular opportunities in environments that are equitable, safe, diverse, and inclusive. Through an integrated program, school library media specialists support students so that they will be college and career ready.
3. HCPS is also committed to ensuring that students have access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment and appropriate academic, social, and economic supports are in place so that personal and social identifiers are not barriers or obstacles to accessing educational opportunities. Elementary and Secondary library media curriculum are designed to meet each group’s appropriate needs, with current curriculum information available on the HCPS website’s “Library/ Media” page.

4. HCPS has established and shall maintain a unified school media library program in accordance with State law and regulation as well as any other relevant federal and state laws and regulations.
5. School library media specialists are delegated with the responsibility for the review, evaluation, and selection of materials to develop the school library media collection utilizing guidelines found in the selection and evaluation administrative procedure.
6. School libraries shall have a well-balanced collection of library materials considering the following criteria:
 - a. Supports the assessed curricular needs, reflecting the identified learning outcomes of the instructional program;
 - b. Supports the informational needs and interest of students;
 - c. Appropriateness for recommended level (elementary, middle, high);
 - d. Includes a variety of formats;
 - e. Earns favorable reviews in professional review sources and favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by library professionals;
 - f. Assessed for currency of information as related to content and purpose with consideration of recent copyright date as appropriate to the subject;
 - g. Assessed for accuracy in content where facts are presented objectively with consideration given to the authority of the author, organization, and publisher/producer;
 - h. Provides a global perspective and promotes diversity as a positive attribute of our society;
 - i. Represents differing viewpoints providing students access to a variety of resources to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
7. Under the oversight of the Division of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, a reconsideration process, facilitated by the Reconsideration Committee, shall be followed to address concerns or objections regarding specific items in the library collection. The current reconsideration process shall be publicly available at hcps.org.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Sean W. Bulson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE
Adopted		

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References	
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Kimberly Neal	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: General Counsel
PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Heather Kutcher	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
DESIGNEE NAME: Martha Barwick	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE: Supervisor of Innovation in Learning
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005:	

LEGAL REFERENCES¹

References are set forth in the Evaluation and Selection of School Library Materials Procedure.