

GUIDELINE FOR EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Board of Education believes that textbooks should support and enrich the curriculum and make possible the achievement of the district's instructional goals. The chief school administrator shall develop procedures for continual review of new texts being offered and evaluation of those already in use to ensure that the textbooks used in this district are up to date in the factual matter they present and further the district's instructional goals.

The superintendent shall develop procedures for continuous timely review of all instructional materials to ensure that they continue to be factual and relevant. The principal or designee shall be responsible for establishing an annual textbook evaluation schedule. Every text shall be reviewed every five years for replacement consideration or continued use. Other factors being equal, multi-ethnic textbooks should be adopted over other textbooks and continued effort should be made to stimulate publishers to publish multi-ethnic textbooks. Multi-ethnic textbooks should depict a pluralistic society, one in which there is more than one kind of reality. Adoption of this policy should not preclude filling in presently adopted series.

Textbooks and instructional materials should be judged by additional standards which shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Does the material reflect the district's affirmative action/equity policy, which prohibits the teaching or encouragement of bias based on any categories listed in law or Board policy?
- B. Does it help pupils develop abilities in critical reading and thinking?
- C. Does it provide effective basic or advanced education for the pupils for whom it is intended?

The review process shall:

- A. Be conducted by teaching staff members, particularly those teachers who will be using the materials as an integral part of the instructional program;
- B. Include a written review of the material which shall reflect the consensus of the teaching staff.

Instructional materials shall be selected in accordance with the following principles:

- A. Instructional materials (print and non-print) shall be chosen for values of interest and enlightenment of all pupils in the district. Instructional materials shall not be excluded because of the race, nationality, or the political or religious views of the writer.
- B. Every effort shall be made to provide material that presents all points of view concerning problems and issues of our times, international, national, and local. Books or other reading matter of sound factual authority shall not be prescribed or removed from library shelves to classrooms because of partisan doctrinal approval or disapproval.
- C. Censorship of instructional materials shall be challenged in order to maintain the school's responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

The chief school administrator shall develop administrative rules outlining a procedure for the selection of instructional materials that meets the above criteria. Instructional materials used within the district should be sufficient in quantity and scope to meet the needs of every pupil in the district.

The Board, by law, makes the final textbook selection decision. However, prior to final adoption, the recommendations resulting from each review will be given thorough consideration.

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Any citizen who objects to the final selections made by the Board should follow the procedures outlined in regulation 6161.2 Complaints Regarding Instructional Materials.

Supplementary Materials

Supplementary printed materials from commercial, political, religious or other non-school sources must have the approval of the appropriate administrator before being used in the schools. This approval may be given to materials which are of obvious educational quality, which supplement and enrich text, and reference book materials for definite school courses which are timely and up to date and which promote American democratic ideals and moral values.

Advertising materials of political or religious nature shall not be displayed or distributed in the schools or on the school grounds. Pupils may not be used as the agents for distributing non-school materials to the home without the approval of the superintendent.

Teachers may use special aids (non-printed materials) such as models, cuts, films, slides, pictures, charts, or exhibits for educational purposes with the approval of the appropriate administrator, although such materials may bear the name of a commercial business which may have provided the aid.

Educational films secured from or through commercial sources shall be approved by the appropriate administrator prior to their use in the schools.

Animal Dissection

Animal dissection is not required and alternative education shall be provided. The Board, by law, will allow pupils to refuse to participate in animal dissection.

- A. The Board will offer an alternate education program for a course or portion of a course involving dissection of animals if requested in writing by the guardian.
- B. A public school pupil from kindergarten through grade 12 may refuse to dissect, vivisection, incubate, capture or otherwise harm or destroy animals or any parts thereof as part of a course of instruction with guardian's permission.
 1. "Alternative education project" means the use of video tapes, models, films, books, computers, or any other tools which provide an alternative method for obtaining and testing the knowledge, information, or experience required by a course of study.
 2. "Animal" means any living organism that is an invertebrate, or is in the phylum chordata or organisms which have a notochord and includes an animal's cadaver or severed parts of an animal's cadaver.
- C. The school shall notify pupils and their parents or guardians at the beginning of each school year of the right to decline to participate in the activities enumerated in subsection a. of this section and shall authorize parents or guardians to assert the right of their children to refuse to participate in these activities. Within two weeks of the receipt of the notice, the pupils, parents or guardians shall notify the school if the right to decline participation in the enumerated activities will be exercised.
- D. Any pupil who chooses to refrain from participation in or observation of a portion of a course of instruction in accordance with this section shall be offered an alternative education project for the purpose of providing the pupil with the factual knowledge, information or experience required by the course of study. A pupil may

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refuse to participate in an alternative education project which involves or necessitates any harmful use of an animal or animal parts.

E. A pupil shall not be discriminated against, in grading or in any other manner, based upon a decision to exercise the rights afforded pursuant to this act.

Legal References:

<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:4-25	Prescribing minimum courses of study for public schools; approval of courses of study
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:11-1	General mandatory powers and duties
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:33-1	District to furnish suitable facilities; adoption of courses of study
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:34-1	Textbooks; selection; furnished free with supplies; appropriations
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35-1 <u>et seq.</u>	Curriculum and Courses
<u>See Particularly:</u>	
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35-4.25	Refusal to participate in certain school activities related to animal dissection
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:7-1.4	Responsibilities of the district Board of Education
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:23A-20.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Purchase and loan of textbooks
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:32-14.1	Review of mandated programs and services

Comprehensive Equity Plan, State Department of Education

Possible

Cross References:

*1312	Community complaints and inquiries
*2224	Nondiscrimination/affirmative action
*5145.4	Equal educational opportunity
6000	Concepts and roles in instruction
*6010	Goals and objectives
*6121	Nondiscrimination/affirmative action
*6140	Curriculum adoption
*6141	Curriculum design/development
*6142.1	Family life education
*6144	Controversial issues
*6161.2	Complaints regarding instructional materials
*6163.1	Media center/library

* Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual

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