

LIBRARY/MEDIA POLICY MANUAL

I. Statement of Policy

Oneonta City School System selects instructional materials to implement, enrich, and support the educational program for the student. Materials must serve both the breadth of the curriculum and the needs and interests of individual students. It is the obligation of the district to provide for a wide range of abilities and to respect the diversity of many differing points of view. To this end, principles must be placed above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality and appropriateness.

II. Objectives of Selection

The main objective of our selection procedure is to provide the students with a wide range of educational materials on all levels of difficulty and in a variety of formats, with diversity of appeal, allowing for the presentation of many different points of view.

The objective of the media center is to make available to faculty and students a collection of materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and meet the needs of the students and faculty served.

In selecting materials for the library media center, consideration is given to meeting individual learning needs, abilities and learning styles, providing background materials to supplement classroom instruction, providing a broad range of materials on controversial issues to help students develop critical, analytical skills, etc.

III. Responsibility for Selection

While selection of materials involves many people, including administrators, supervisors, teachers, library media specialists, and students, the responsibility for coordinating and recommending the selection and purchase of library media materials rests with the certificated library media personnel

The Oneonta City Board of Education shall delegate to the Superintendent of Schools the authority and responsibility for selection of all print and non-print materials. Responsibilities for actual selection shall rest with appropriate professionally trained personnel who shall discharge this obligation consistent with the Board's adopted selection criteria and procedures. Selection procedures shall involve representatives of the professional staff directly affected by the selections, and persons qualified by preparation to aid in wise selection.

The library media specialist will work cooperatively with staff members to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selections;

however, final responsibility for selection of materials for the library media center lies with the media specialists.

IV. Criteria for Selection

Staff members involved in selection of resource materials shall use the following criteria as a guide:

- a. educational significance
- b. contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interests of the students
- c. favorable reviews found in standard selection sources
- d. favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
- e. reputation and significance of the author, producer and publisher
- f. validity, currency, and appropriates of material
- g. contribution the material makes to breath of representative viewpoints on controversial issues
- h. high degree of potential user appeal
- i. high artistic quality and/or literary style
- j. quality and variety of format
- k. value commensurate with cost and/or need
- l. timeliness or permanence
- m. integrity

The following recommended lists shall be consulted in the selection of materials, but selection is not limited to their listings.

- a. Bibliographies latest editions available, including supplements)

American Historical Fiction

Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades
The Best in Children's Books
Children and Books
Children's Catalog
Elementary School Library Collection
European Historical Fiction and Biography
Guide to Sources in Educational Media
Junior High School Catalog
Reference Books for School Libraries
Subject Guide to Children's Books in Print
Subject Index to Books for Intermediate Grades
Subject Index to Nooks for Primary Grades

b. Current reviewing media:

AASA Science Books and Films
American Film & Video Association Evaluations
Booklist
Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
Horn Book
Kirkus Reviews
Library Journal
School Library Journal
Wilson Library Bulletin

The following criteria will be used as they apply.

1. Learning resources shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and district and the aims and objectives of individual schools and specific courses.
2. Learning resources shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
3. Learning resources shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
4. Physical format and appearance of learning resources shall be suitable for their intended use.
5. Learning resources shall be designed to help students gain an awareness of our pluralistic society.

6. Learning resources shall be designed to motivate students and staff to examine their own duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges and participating citizen in our society.

7. Learning resources shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.

The selection of learning resources on controversial issues will be directed towards maintaining a diverse collection representing various views.

Learning resources shall clarify historical and contemporary forces by presenting and analyzing intergroup tension and conflict objectively, placing emphasis on recognizing and understanding social and economic problems.

The following kinds of material will be selected for the media center:

1. Materials which are an integral part of the instructional program.
2. Materials which are appropriate for the reading level and understanding of students in the school.
3. Materials which reflect the interests and needs of the students and faculty served by the media center.
4. Materials which merit inclusion in the collection because of their literary and/or artistic value.
5. Material which present information with the greatest degree of accuracy and clarity possible.
6. Materials which represent a fair and unbiased presentation of information. In controversial areas, the media specialist in cooperation with the faculty should select materials representing as many shades of opinion as possible in order that students may have available varying viewpoints.

V. Procedures for Selection of Learning Resources

In selecting learning resources, professional personnel will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids to selection and other appropriate sources. The actual resource will be examined whenever possible.

Recommendations for purchase involve administrators, teachers, students, district personnel and community persons, as appropriate.

Gift materials shall be judged by the criteria outlined and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.

Selection is an ongoing process which should include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.

Requests, suggestions and reactions for the purchase of instructional materials shall be gathered from staff to the greatest extent possible and students when appropriate.




Reviews of proposed acquisitions will be sought in the literature of reputable professional organizations and other reviewing sources recognized for their objectivity and wide experience.

Materials will be examined by professional staff to the extent necessary or practicable to apply criteria.

Materials for media centers are selected by the professional media staff with due regard to suggestions from the faculty, parents, and students. Final selection is made by the media specialists of the school. Professionally recognized reviewing periodicals, standard catalogs, and other selection aids are used by the media specialists and the faculty to guide them in their selection.

VI. Procedures for Dealing With Challenged Materials

The following procedure will be followed when material is challenged:

-  request the complainant to fill out a written complaint form. (copy on file in the media center)
-  assign a review committee to examine the material in question.
-  request that the committee report their findings to the school board.

Procedure for handling complaints

No duly selected materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the school except upon the recommendation of a review committee (as provided for below) 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 review committee is appealed to it.

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.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant shall be given a Challenged Materials Form to be completed and returned before consideration will be given to the complaint.

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 in the building involved will call together a committee of five to consider the complaint. This committee shall consist of the curriculum director and from the school involved: the principal, the library media specialist, a teacher, and a PTA representative.

The committee shall meet to discuss the material, following the guidelines, and shall prepare a report on the material containing their recommendations on disposition of the matter.

The principal shall notify complainant of the decision and send a formal report and recommendation to the Superintendent. In answering the complainant, the principal 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/she may ask the Superintendent to present an appeal to the Board of Education which shall make a final determination of the issue.