

## **Selection of Instructional Materials**

### **I. Statement of Policy**

Every school system should have a comprehensive policy on the selection of instructional materials. Haphazard patterns of acquisition will result in waste because some, perhaps many, materials will overlap in content, or will be unrelated to changing patterns of instructional curriculum. The selection policy should relate to and include all materials: textbooks, library books, periodicals, films, video cassettes, records, cassettes, and compact discs, electronically assessed, recorded or reproducible materials, study prints, pictures, projectable materials and maps.

The Board of Trustees of Sweetwater County School district No. 2 believes in the principles of intellectual freedom and the tenets of freedom of speech as they relate to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. They will endeavor to uphold these principles and rights for the students, teachers, and staff of Sweetwater School District No. 2. Persons having complaints or concerns about the instructional materials used in the schools should feel free to express these complaints or concerns. Parents may request their children be given alternate assignments, but no one has the right to have appropriate educational materials withheld from other people's children.

(See "statement on Intellectual Freedom," "Students' Right to Read," "Library Bill of Rights," and "Freedom to Read.")

It is the intent of School District No. 2 to acquire instructional materials to readily and adequately meet the educational needs of teachers and pupils. Materials will be selected at varying levels of difficulty with diversity of appeal. The presentation of different points of view will support and enrich the curriculum and take into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels.

### **II. Responsibility for Selection**

The Board of Trustees of Sweetwater County School District No. 2 is legally responsible for all matters relating to the selection of materials for the District.

The responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated to the professionally trained and certificated staff as employed by Sweetwater School District No. 2.

### **III. Criteria for Selection of Materials**

Materials shall support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the District and the objectives of specific courses.

Materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.

Materials shall be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.

### **Videotape Policy**

1. In general, copyright guidelines permit in-classroom performance of copyrighted videotape when it is used for instructional purposes in a teaching situation and is a lawfully made copy.
2. Guidelines for choosing videotapes.
  - a. Videotapes should be selected for their direct relevance to the instructional program.
  - b. General selection criteria should include: quality of the overall work and its individual parts, and fair and accurate representation of the facts.
  - c. Each videotape must give a fair and objective presentation of sensitive subjects at the maturity level of its viewers. Each program must be selected for age and grade level appropriateness and viewers maturity levels.
3. Permission Procedures
  - a. The teacher will receive prior permission from the Principal before the showing of any videotape rated 'PG', 'PG-13'. Or 'R'.
  - b. The teacher will provide prior notification and obtain lawful parental/custodial written permission, a minimum of three (3) school days, before a student is allowed to view any videotape that has a "PG". 'PG-13' or 'R' rating.
    - 1) At the elementary level, such notification and permission is required for showing "PG" rated movies. ('PG-13' and "R" rated movies are not permitted for consideration at the elementary level.)
    - 2) At the middle school level, such notification and permission is required for showing 'PG-13' rated movies ('R' rated movies are not

permitted for consideration at the middle school level.)

- 3) At the high school level, such notification and permission is required for showing 'R' rated movies, for pupils age 17 and under.
4. Other media such as CD-ROM, laser disc, DVD, movies, and audiotapes, etc, while not part of the video rating system, should be selected and used by applying the same criteria as videotapes.

#### **IV. Procedure Considering Selection**

##### **A. Selection of Instructional Materials**

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.

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

Learning resources shall reflect high standards of quality to every extent possible in:

- \* Presentation
- \* Physical format
- \* Educational significant
- \* Readability
- \* Authenticity
- \* Artistic quality and/or literary style
- \* Factual content
- \* Technical quality
- \* Popular appeal
- \* Reputation of the producer
- \* Authoritativeness
- \* Value commensurate with costs and/or need.

##### **B. Interlibrary Loan, Networks and Telecommunications.**

There is no way to control the content of materials received from other sources such as interlibrary loan, telecommunications, networks, computer bulletin boards, etc. These sources are made available to meet educational goals and objectives for teaching research skills and for providing materials of interest that are not available locally. These sources of information help acquaint students with information from the world at large.

**C. Copyright Law**

Sweetwater County School District No. 2 will obey the Copyright Act of 1976 and the guidelines for fair use. The purpose of the Copyright Act of 1976 is to promote the creation and dissemination of knowledge and ideas and to ensure that authors, artists, etc. receive reasonable reward for their efforts. Educators may copy materials following these guidelines:

1. That decision be spontaneous, occurring so soon prior to classroom use that permission can't be received and that reproduced item will be short, that is, only a single copy of a book chapter, article, short story, essay, poem (-250 words), maps. Etc.
2. That the cumulative effect of the copying does not use more than three items from the same source and that there are no more than nine instances a semester.
3. Educators are prohibited from photocopying to make anthologies, compilations, or collective works. All these guidelines refer to copying without permission

**D. Gifts**

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

**E. Discarding**

Selection is an ongoing process which should include the removal of materials on longer appropriate and the replacement of lost, worn and aged materials still of educational value. Materials may be withdrawn at the discretion of the professional personnel if the material is outdated or worn/damaged.

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LEGAL REFS.: Wyoming Education Policies Manual, code IIBC  
W.S. 21-9-201(a) Wyoming Education Policies Manual,  
IIA

CROSS REF.: KH, Gifts to Schools  
KLB, Public complaints about Curriculum or Instructional  
Materials  
JN, Student Fees, Fines and Charges