

Effective: July 1, 2023

Policy Outline

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I. Policy Value Statement

The Board of Education of Howard County (Board) recognizes its responsibility for the selection and acquisition of instructional resources, based on the Superintendent’s recommendation, in accordance with current federal and state law, COMAR, and established Board policies. The Board further recognizes that the instructional resources will provide content that aligns with local, state, and national curriculum standards, maintains educational excellence, nurtures student cognitive, social and emotional well-being, and affirms student identity and experiences.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures and criteria for the evaluation, selection, and review of instructional resources for use in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

III. Standards

- A. All approved curriculum instructional resources for use by students will be selected consistent with HCPSS established procedures and selection criteria.
- B. All supplemental curriculum, teacher-selected, and teacher-created instructional resources for use by students will comply with HCPSS selection criteria.
- C. The HCPSS selection criteria requires that all approved curriculum, supplemental curriculum, teacher-selected, and teacher-created instructional resources are:

1. Aligned to the HCPSS curriculum.
 2. Designated age appropriate for the students for which the resources will be used.
 3. Representative and respectful of the pluralistic nature and diversity of the Howard County community and global society, as outlined in Policy 1080 Educational Equity.
 4. Of high quality content and instructional methodologies.
 5. Reflective of diverse perspectives and points of view, as outlined in the implementation procedures for Policy 8050 Teaching of Controversial Issues.
 6. Compliant with The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment.
 7. Compliant with HCPSS hardware, software, learning management system, and network standards to ensure optimum performance of electronic, digital, and web-based instruction.
 8. Compliant with federal and state laws regarding data privacy, copyright, and accessibility for all students.
 9. Adheres to the following guidance for rated motion pictures:
 - a. High School – PG-13, PG, G
 - b. Middle School – PG, G
 - c. Grades 4-5 – PG, G
 - d. Grades PreK-3 – G
- D. HCPSS employees will define a process to solicit stakeholder feedback on proposed resources for the list of approved curriculum instructional resources.
- E. HCPSS employees will define how Curricular/Program Advisory Committees are utilized in the selection process for proposed additions to the approved curriculum instructional resources list.
- F. The media center purchasing sources will be used to select library media center collection resources.
- G. HCPSS employees will define a process for reevaluation of approved curriculum instructional resources and library media center collection resources.
- H. HCPSS employees will define a process for reevaluation of supplemental curriculum, teacher-selected, and teacher-created instructional resources.

IV. Responsibilities

- A. The Superintendent/designee will oversee the selection of instructional resources that align with the vision and goals of the HCPSS.
- B. The Superintendent/designee will annually provide any recommended revisions to the approved curriculum instructional resources to the Board for approval.

- C. The Superintendent/designee will annually notify the public of this policy and of upcoming committee appointments via school system communication.
- D. The Superintendent/designee will annually notify HCPSS employees of this policy to ensure that employees selecting and using instructional resources, including audio/visual materials, follow HCPSS selection criteria and procedures.
- E. The Superintendent/designee will ensure the essential and supplemental digital tools are posted annually on the HCPSS website.
- F. Curricular/program area supervisors will ensure resources recommended for the approved curriculum instructional resources list and all supplemental curriculum instructional resources are consistent with HCPSS selection criteria.
- G. Principals will ensure that all instructional resources, including teacher-selected and teacher-created instructional resources, used in their schools, are consistent with HCPSS selection criteria.
- H. Teachers will ensure that all instructional resources, including teacher-selected and teacher-created instructional resources, used in their classrooms, are consistent with HCPSS selection criteria.
- I. HCPSS employees using instructional resources will ensure that all HCPSS selection criteria have been observed.

V. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for implementing this policy.

VI. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Age Appropriate – Educational activities and resources that are suitable to foster social, intellectual, communicative, and emotional development and to allow students to use their skills in these areas while considering the developmental level and physical skills.
- B. Approved Curriculum Instructional Resources – Resources that have been vetted in accordance with HCPSS selection process and criteria. These resources, including textbooks, literature, commercially produced programs, digital tools, and reference tools, may be used in educational lessons for students.
- C. Curricular/Program Area – A focused subset of knowledge and/or skills taken from the broader curriculum. HCPSS Curricular Areas include English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, Health and Physical Education, Instructional Technology, Library Media, and World

Languages. Program Areas include English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Gifted and Talented, and Reading Interventions.

- D. Curricular/Program Advisory Committees – A committee convened with the goal of providing broad input for a curricular/program area. Membership in advisory committees will include parents, teachers, students, and other community members.
- E. Curricular/Program Area Supervisor – A coordinator, instructional facilitator, director, or other person assigned responsibility for the resource selection process of a particular office, area, or program.
- F. Curriculum – The prescribed elements of programs and courses which state clearly and specifically what students are expected to know and be able to do, how well they should be able to do it, how they will meet the learning objectives, and the means by which they will be assessed.
- G. Curriculum Standards – The learning outcomes that students are expected to master, that reflect the best knowledge of the developmental needs of learners and comply with requirements from local policy and state law.
- H. Digital Tool – Any website, application (app), or software that requires an account.
- I. HCPSS Employee – Any individual who is a permanent or temporary employee of the HCPSS whose compensation is paid in whole or part by the Board, including but not limited to, teachers, substitute teachers, paraeducators, and other school-based and Central Office support staff.
- J. HCPSS Selection Criteria – Systemwide guidelines followed when selecting instructional resources.
- K. Library Media Center Collection Resources – Print, non-print, and digital resources available in school media centers.
- L. Media Center Purchasing Sources – The organizations, resources, and publications listed in the Approved List of Bibliographical Sources and Reviewing Journals for library media centers.
- M. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
 - 1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
 - 2. Adoptive Parent – A parent who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.

3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody, or control over the student but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article §7-101(c) (Informal Kinship Care) or has been issued a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Verification of Release form entering into a custodial arrangement with the federal government.
 6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.
- N. Software – Any application or script executed on a computer system, server, or other electronic devices.
- O. Supplemental Curriculum Instructional Resources – Resources selected, curated, and/or created for instructional use as a part of the curriculum writing process as outlined in Policy 8000 Curriculum. These resources include sample assessments, background material on content, suggested instructional strategies, sample unit and lesson plan formats, and support materials.
- P. Teacher-Created Instructional Resources – Resources, other than approved curriculum instructional resources and supplemental curriculum instructional resources created by the teacher to support or reinforce instruction.
- Q. Teacher-Selected Instructional Resources – Resources, other than approved curriculum instructional resources and supplemental curriculum instructional resources selected by the teacher to support or reinforce instruction.

VII. References

- A. Legal
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794 (d))
The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
Md. Ann. Code, Education Article, §4-205
Md. Ann. Code, Education Article, §7-106
COMAR 13A.04.05, Education That is Multicultural
COMAR 13A.05.02, Administration of Services to Students with Disabilities

- B. Board Policies
 - Policy 1080 Educational Equity
 - Policy 2050 Advisory Committees to Staff and Schools
 - Policy 3040 Technology Security
 - Policy 3060 Student Data Governance and Privacy
 - Policy 4010 Donations
 - Policy 4050 Procurement of Goods and/or Services
 - Policy 7060 Intellectual Property and Royalties
 - Policy 8000 Curriculum
 - Policy 8050 Teaching of Controversial Issues
 - Policy 8060 Resource Speakers
 - Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology, Digital Tools, and Social Media
 - Policy 10000 Student, Parent, Family and Community Involvement
- C. Relevant Data Sources
(none)
- D. Other
 - Citizens Review of Instructional Resources form
 - Request for Reevaluation of Instructional Resources in Use form

VIII. History¹

ADOPTED: December 3, 1975
REVIEWED: February 24, 2022
MODIFIED:
REVISED: October 26, 1989
December 12, 1996
April 6, 2006
January 11, 2018
June 8, 2023
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2023

¹ Key: *Adopted*-Original date the Board took action to approve a policy; *Reviewed*-The date the status of a policy was assessed by the Superintendent's Standing Policy Group; *Modified*-The date the Board took action to alter a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee did not require a comprehensive examination; *Revised*-The date the Board took action on a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee needed a comprehensive examination; *Effective*-The date a policy is implemented throughout the HCPSS, typically July 1 following Board action.

**SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL
RESOURCES**

Effective: July 1, 2023

I. General Procedures

- A. The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) procedures for the selection of instructional resources will be used with the exception of the procedures established for:
 - 1. The program of Family Life and Human Development; and
 - 2. Any other resources governed by COMAR.
- B. The participation of parents, teachers, students, and other interested community members is a significant element in the selection process. Membership of all committees related to this policy should be representative of the population of Howard County as a whole.
- C. The following instructional resources may be used with students:
 - 1. Approved curriculum instructional resources that are chosen using procedures and HCPSS selection criteria.
 - 2. Supplemental curriculum, teacher-selected, and teacher-created instructional resources that comply with the selection criteria.

II. Selection of Resources for the Approved Curriculum Instructional Resources List

- A. All resources for the approved curriculum instructional resources list will be consistent with HCPSS policies and the established HCPSS selection criteria.
- B. Each curricular/program area supervisor will use the HCPSS selection criteria to curate and review proposed additions to the approved curriculum instructional resources list.
- C. All resources for the approved curriculum instructional resources list will adhere to the following public review of proposed resources procedures:
 - 1. Prior to consideration by the Board, the corresponding Curricular/Program Advisory Committee will provide feedback on the proposals for the approved curriculum instructional resources list according to the HCPSS selection criteria.

2. Prior to consideration by the Board, all instructional resources intended to be added to the approved curriculum instructional resources list and for systemwide student use will be publicly available for 14 calendar days for parents and community members to review and comment.
3. The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will notify the public regarding the opportunity to review the recommended curriculum instructional resources intended to be added to the approved curriculum instructional resources list.
4. Any HCPSS employee, Howard County community member, HCPSS students or parents may provide feedback concerning the proposed instructional resources by completing the Citizen's Review of Instructional Resources form included in the public notice and available at the display site.
5. The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will review and respond to all public comments on the proposed instructional resources.

III. Selection of Supplemental Curriculum Instructional Resources

- A. All supplemental curriculum instructional resources to be used with students will be consistent with HCPSS policies and the established HCPSS selection criteria.
- B. Each curricular/program area supervisor will manage the review and selection process of all instructional resources, including digital tools.
- C. Excerpts from audio and visual resources excluded by this policy may be used to address an important instructional purpose including alignment with course-specific literature/texts, advanced placement, or external course (e.g., Howard County Community College courses and Applied Research Laboratory courses) objectives.

IV. Selection of Teacher-Selected and Teacher-Created Instructional Resources

- A. All teacher-selected and teacher-created instructional resources to be used with students will be consistent with HCPSS policies and the established HCPSS selection criteria.
- B. Excerpts from audio and visual resources excluded by this policy may be used to address an important instructional purpose including alignment with course-specific literature/texts, advanced placement, or external course (e.g., Howard County Community College courses and Applied Research Laboratory courses) objectives.

V. Selection of Library Media Center Collection Resources

- A. Library media center collection resources may be selected from the Approved List of Bibliographic Sources and Reviewing Journals maintained by Media Technical Services.
- B. The Approved List of Bibliographic Sources and Reviewing Journals will be posted on the HCPSS website.
- C. Library media center collection resources not reviewed in the Approved List of Bibliographic Sources and Reviewing Journals may be selected and purchased upon favorable evaluation using the Selection Criteria for Media Center Resources form. A separate form is required for each item purchased. Such resources will be in agreement with established policies and selection criteria.

VI. Resource Reevaluation Committee

- A. The Resource Reevaluation Committees (RRC) reevaluates approved curriculum instructional resources and library media center collection resources for which requests for reevaluation are received.
 - 1. Members of the RRC will be appointed for a two-year period, with one-half of the committee to be replaced or reappointed each year.
 - 2. The RRC will comprise 11-21 members, including:
 - a. An HCPSS employee appointed by the Superintendent/designee who will serve as the chairperson (chair) of the committee.
 - b. Students from across the county (at least one).
 - c. Curricular/program area supervisors assigned to the committee by the chair based on the resources to be reevaluated.
 - d. An equal number of members representing the following stakeholder groups:
 - i. Community members from across the county comprised of:
 - a. Parents with students currently enrolled in HCPSS, must be the majority of the community representatives.
 - b. Howard County residents.
 - ii. Current HCPSS school-based certificated employees representing elementary, middle, and high schools from various disciplines, including School Library Media.
 - 3. RRC members may only represent one group.

- B. Community members will be selected for the committee according to the following process:
1. The chair will annually notify the general public of upcoming appointments to the committee, the functions of the committee, membership requirements, committee meeting dates, and the availability of application forms from March through April.
 2. The chair will oversee the selection of applicants to fill vacancies.
 3. Members will be selected via lottery for each stakeholder group to ensure balanced committee representation.
 4. All committee members will be informed of the selection results by June 1.
 5. Committee membership will be effective July 1 of the following school year.
 6. All committee members will be given a roster of the RRC.
- C. The RRC will:
1. Conduct the following five annual meetings:
 - a. Orientation meeting (1); and

The committee chair will provide training for the committee members, including the purpose and scope of the committee, committee member requirements and expectations, the process and cycle for reevaluation, and the criteria for evaluating resources as outlined in this policy.
 - b. Quarterly reevaluation meetings (4)

Committee members review and discuss resources for which requests for reevaluation have been received and vote to determine a recommendation for the Superintendent to retain or remove the reviewed resources.

 - i. During the reevaluation process, library media center resources remain in media center circulations and collections
 - ii. During the reevaluation process, curriculum instructional resources remain in use for instruction.
 2. Quarterly reevaluation meetings require a quorum including the chair, program area supervisor, at least three community members, and at least three HCPSS school-based certificated employees in attendance.

3. The committee chair will provide committee members with a copy of the resource for reevaluation at least one week prior to the reevaluation meeting.
4. Committee members who have read the entirety of the resource for which a request for reevaluation has been received and are in attendance at the quarterly reevaluation meeting may vote to retain or remove the reviewed resource.
5. A majority vote to retain or remove a resource from committee members present at the reevaluation meeting will constitute the committee's recommendation.
6. The chair of the committee will submit reevaluation recommendations made by the committee to the Superintendent/designee.
7. The Superintendent/designee will inform the requestor(s) of the reevaluation request of the Superintendent's decision within 21 days of the reevaluation meeting.

VII. Request for Review of Supplemental Curriculum, Teacher-Selected, and Teacher-Created Instructional Resources

- A. Currently enrolled students and their parents may request to review supplemental curriculum, teacher-selected, and teacher-created instructional resources in use, in writing to the school principal. HCPSS employees may only request to review supplemental curriculum instructional resources in use.
- B. The principal will:
 1. Make available specific resources for review upon request,
 2. Review questioned resources against the criteria outlined in the HCPSS selection criteria and make every effort to resolve the concern at the school level.
 3. Notify the Superintendent's designee if a supplemental curriculum instructional resource does not comply with the criteria outlined in the policy for action.
 4. Notify the HCPSS employee and the Community Superintendent if a teacher-selected or teacher-created instructional resource does not comply with the criteria outlined in the policy for action.
 5. Notify the requestor of the disposition of the review.

VIII. Request for Review and Reevaluation of Approved Curriculum Instructional Resources and Library Media Center Collection Resources

- A. Currently enrolled students, parents of currently enrolled students, and current HCPSS employees may request to review approved curriculum instructional resources and library media center collection resources used in their school of attendance or employment, using the following process-:
1. Request for review of approved curriculum instructional resources should be directed to the school principal where the resource is available or in use.
 2. The principal will make available specific resources for review upon request and make every effort to resolve the concern at the school level.
 3. Following a review of the resources and a conference with the principal, the student, parent, or HCPSS employee may file a Request for Reevaluation of Instructional Resources In Use form with the principal of the school if an unsatisfactory solution was not reached at the school level.
 4. The principal will forward a copy of the completed form to the Superintendent/designee.
- B. The Superintendent/designee, upon notification that a satisfactory solution was not reached at the local school level, will refer the matter to the RRC.
- C. The Superintendent/designee will notify the requestor of the receipt of the request within 14 school days of receiving the request.
- D. The RRC will reevaluate the resource based on the request and the selection criteria aligned to the type and use of the resource and make a recommendation to the Superintendent/designee.
1. The chair of the RRC will include the resources for reevaluation on the next scheduled RRC quarterly reevaluation meeting. Prior to that meeting:
 - a. The RRC chair will notify the appropriate curricular/program area supervisor, RRC members, and other relevant personnel of the request and the quarterly reevaluation meeting date.
 - b. The appropriate curricular/program area supervisor will obtain sample copies of the resources and forward them to the RRC chair.
 - c. The RRC chair will distribute the sample resources to the RRC members at least one week prior to the scheduled quarterly reevaluation meeting.
 - i. If the request for review is received fewer than five (5) business days prior to the next quarterly reevaluation meeting, the chair will defer the review of the resource to the subsequent meeting.

- ii. If the needed number of copies of the resource for which a reevaluation request has been received are not able to be secured within 10 business days prior to the next scheduled quarterly reevaluation meeting, the chair will defer the review of the resource to the subsequent meeting.
 2. The RRC chair will facilitate the quarterly reevaluation meeting.
 3. The RRC chair will notify the Superintendent/designee in writing of the committee's recommendation.
 4. The Superintendent/designee will notify the requestor of the reevaluation disposition in writing of the decision to remove or retain the resources.
 - a. The Superintendent/designee will notify the requestor in writing of the disposition of the reevaluation within 21 days of the quarterly reevaluation meeting.
 - b. Once the RRC reevaluation process for a resource has been completed, the resource will remain available for at least two years before a subsequent reevaluation process can be initiated.
- E. The resource reevaluation requestor(s) may direct further appeals to the Board.
- F. The Board will serve as the final level of appeal within the HCPSS using the following procedures:
 1. The requestor will submit the appeal form to the Board Administrator.
 2. The Board Administrator will notify the Superintendent/designee of the appeal request and provide a timeline for responding to the request.
 3. The appeal of the decision of the challenged resources will be a written appeal under Section 4-205, Education Article, Maryland Annotated Code.
 4. The Superintendent/designee will provide copies of the challenged resources for the Board's review and submit information to the Board for consideration, including training of the RRC, meeting notes, and decision on the challenged resources.
 5. The consideration of the appeal will occur pursuant to the Board of Education Rules and Procedures for Appeals.
- G. Once Board disposition of the appeal has been given for reevaluated resources, no further reevaluation will be made for at least two years.
- H. The Superintendent will provide the Board with an annual report of the resources requested for reevaluation and the disposition of each resource.

X. Monitoring

Policy 8040 implementation procedures will be overseen by the Division of Academics.

XI. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definition applies:

Resources Reevaluation Committee (RRC) – A countywide committee that reevaluates approved curriculum instructional and library media center collection resources for which requests for reevaluation have been received.

XII. History¹

ADOPTED: October 26, 1989

REVIEWED: February 24, 2022

MODIFIED:

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December 12, 1996

July 28, 2003

April 6, 2006

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