

I. Policy Statement

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility for the selection and acquisition of instructional materials including textbooks, classroom materials, media materials, and computer software in accordance with current state law. The Board further recognizes that the instructional materials selected must provide content that is accurate, current, and challenging to all students.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the evaluation, selection, and review of instructional materials for use in Howard County Public Schools.

III. Definitions

- A. Book – a written work that has been published. Books are available in a variety of formats, such as print, audio recordings and e-books (books whose contents are in an electronic format).
- B. Educational and Documentary Videos – Non-dramatic videos produced for educational purposes and generally non-rated.
- C. Full-Length Feature Videos – Dramatic videos produced for entertainment purposes and usually rated G, PG, PG-13, R, or NC-17.
- D. Instructional Materials – Items such as books, other printed matter, multimedia, computer software, online resources, and realia, which are used as a part of the instructional process.
- E. Instructional Materials Criteria/Review Committee (CRC) – A countywide committee of teachers, community members, students, subject area coordinators, and instructional facilitators who re-evaluate approved and proposed texts, review materials for which requests for reevaluation have been received, and review subject area selection criteria.
- F. Media Purchasing Sources – Published review resources chosen by the media selection committee used in the selection of books and audiovisual materials.

- G. Media Selection Committee – Committee of supervisors and media specialists that annually reviews media purchasing sources and proposes additions to and deletions from the approved list.
- H. Multimedia – The integration of multiple forms of media. This includes animation, audio, graphics, images, photographs, text, video, etc. For example, a presentation involving audio and video clips would be considered a “multimedia presentation.”
- I. Realia – Objects from real life used in classroom instruction. Realia includes coins, tools, games, toys, and other objects that do not easily fit into categories like books, periodicals, and audio recordings.
- J. Selection Criteria – Guidelines and standards followed when selecting and purchasing instructional materials.
- K. Subject Area Textbook Committee – Committee of supervisors and teachers that annually reviews textbooks and textbook related materials and proposes additions to and deletions from the approved textbook list.
- L. Supervisor – A coordinator, instructional facilitator, director or other person assigned responsibility for the text or media selection process of a particular office or area.
- M. Supplemental Materials – Non-print and print instructional materials, other than approved textbooks, used to support or reinforce instruction. The term “supplemental materials” does not include class sets of instructional texts.
- N. Textbooks – Books, in a variety of formats, such as print, e-books and audio books, which are designated as the primary source of instruction for students in a course or unit of instruction within a course.

IV. Standards

- A. Only instructional materials, including supplemental materials, that are chosen using approved procedures and subject area selection criteria may be purchased for use with students.
- B. Materials not acquired by Department of Education funds must have the same quality and accomplish the same purposes as all other types of instructional materials, and be consistent with approved policies, selection criteria, and curriculum.
- C. Textbooks are included in the county’s approved textbook list and acquired in class sets for full-class use. Subject area coordinators will determine which titles are to be classified as textbooks in their disciplines.

- D. Subject area coordinators will determine which titles are to be classified as supplemental materials in their disciplines.
- E. Subject area textbook selection committees will be established by each subject area office to determine those textbooks and textbook related materials which are recommended for addition to or deletion from the approved textbook list. Each subject area office will formulate its own selection committee.
- F. A media selection committee will be established by the media services office to determine those purchasing sources that are recommended for addition to or deletion from the media purchasing list.
- G. The countywide Instructional Materials Criteria/Review Committee (CRC) will be established to re-evaluate approved and proposed texts, to reevaluate materials when reevaluation requests are received, and to review the subject area selection criteria created by each instructional office.
- H. Procedures for the implementation of this policy will include selection criteria. This selection criteria will guide the work of the CRC and the creation of subject area selection criteria. Selection criteria developed by each subject area office will be reviewed by the CRC every three years, or as directed by the Superintendent.
- I. Videos or video excerpts must conform to subject area selection criteria and must be approved through established procedures prior to use with students.
- J. Broadcast and cable television programs must conform to subject area selection criteria.

V. Compliance

- A. The Superintendent is responsible for selecting a wide variety of instructional materials which, along with appropriate teaching, will help to achieve the goals and objectives expressed in curriculum guidelines and courses of study.
- B. The Superintendent will annually provide any recommended revisions of the following to the Board of Education for their approval: subject area selection criteria, textbook lists, and media purchasing sources lists.
- C. The Superintendent is responsible for annual notification to the public of this policy and of upcoming committee appointments.
- D. Subject area supervisors are responsible for establishing selection committees and ensuring that recommended instructional materials, including supplemental materials, are approved through the established process.
- E. Principals are responsible for ensuring that only approved instructional materials, including supplemental materials, are used in their schools.

- F. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that only approved instructional materials, including supplemental materials, are used in their classrooms.
- G. The staff member initiating a purchase is responsible for ensuring that all approved procedures and selection criteria have been observed.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop all necessary and appropriate procedures to implement and monitor compliance with this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 7-106 (Selection and Purchase of Materials)
 - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Section 4-205 (Powers and Duties of the Superintendent)
 - COMAR 13A.04.05, Education That is Multicultural
 - COMAR 13A.05.02, Administration of Services to Students with Disabilities
- B. Other Board Policies
 - Policy 4010, Donations
 - Policy 8050, Teaching of Controversial Issues
 - Policy 8080, Acceptable Use of Computer Technology
 - Policy 10000, Parent, Family and Community Involvement

VIII. History

ADOPTED: December 3, 1975
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SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS

Effective: July 1, 2006

I. General Procedures

The procedural statements included in this section are those which are common to the selection of instructional material to be used in the Howard County Public School System with the exception of the procedures established for the program of Family Life and Human Development and any other material governed by COMAR. It is important to note that participation of parents, teachers, students, and other interested community members is a significant element in the total selection process. Participation should be representative of the population of Howard County as a whole. Only materials that are chosen using approved procedures and subject area selection criteria may be purchased for use with students.

A. Organization and Operation of Committees Involved in the Text Selection and Evaluation Process

1. Subject Area Textbook and Media Selection Committees

Subject area textbook selection committees for each subject area and media selection committees will be organized each year. The appropriate supervisor will serve as chairperson. Each textbook selection committee will have a minimum of four classroom teachers representing different schools, and the media selection committee will include a minimum of four media specialists. These committees, by a majority vote,

- a. Establish criteria for the selection of materials,
- b. Identify and propose textbooks and textbook associated materials, and
- c. Identify and propose media purchasing sources for media center materials.

2. Instructional Materials Criteria/Review Committee (CRC)

- a. Members of the CRC will be appointed annually for a two-year period with one-half of the committee to be replaced each year. The committee:
 - i. Reviews criteria for the selection of materials of the following types as directed by the Superintendent/designee:

- Textbooks
 - Media Center materials
- ii. Reviews materials on the proposed lists at its discretion.
 - iii. Reviews materials for which requests for reevaluation have been received.
- b. Membership of the committee must consist of students, teachers, parents or other interested Howard County community members, and appropriate supervisors. The committee will have fifteen members who represent a variety of cultural, ethnic, and religious views.
- i. Students (2) – Two high school students will be named to serve on the committee.
 - ii. Teachers (6) – Six teachers representing elementary (2), middle (2), and high (2) schools will be included on the committee.
 - iii. Supervisors (1) – The Chairperson of the CRC will assign the appropriate subject area supervisor to the committee based upon the material to be reevaluated.
 - iv. Community members (6) – Community members will be selected for the committee according to the following procedures:
 - The Superintendent of Schools will annually notify the general public of upcoming appointments to the committee, functions of the committee, and of the availability of application forms. The deadlines for submission of applications and a telephone number for further information will be included.
 - Annually, the Superintendent/designee will send to every school principal copies of the form entitled, “Application for Membership on Instructional Materials Criteria/Review Committee.”
 - The Superintendent/designee will oversee the selection of applicants to fill vacancies.
 - Four of the six community members must have children enrolled in the Howard County Public School System.
 - The remaining community members must be residents of Howard County.
 - When sufficient volunteers are not available, the Superintendent will appoint the additional members needed to complete the committee.
 - All applicants will be informed of the selection results.
 - All successful applicants will be given a roster of the CRC.
 - v. Additional teachers, community members, and appropriate subject area supervisors may participate in deliberations or complete assigned tasks, but they do not have a vote in those proceedings.

c. Committee Procedures

- i. The chairperson of the committee will submit reevaluations made by the committee to the Superintendent/designee and inform the initiator(s) of the request for review of the decision.
- ii. At meetings where recommendations are made, a quorum must be present and at least three of the representative groups must be in attendance. A majority vote of those present will constitute the recommendation of the committee.

B. Recommendation and Approval of Proposed Materials

1. Identification of Proposed Materials

a. Proposed Textbooks and Media Purchasing Sources

Utilizing selection criteria, the selection committees will develop lists of proposed textbooks and media purchasing sources for use in Howard County Public Schools. Community members and teachers are encouraged to submit suggestions for consideration. These suggestions will be reviewed by the appropriate selection committee. Evaluation sheets are to be completed for textbooks, textbook associated materials, and media purchasing sources. Evaluation sheets will be retained in the file of the appropriate supervisor for two years or as long as the material remains on the approved lists. The following lists will be developed for submission to the Board of Education:

- i. Textbooks
 - Proposed additional textbooks
 - Proposed deletion of textbooks
- ii. Media Purchasing Sources
 - Lists of proposed sources of standard bibliographic references approved for use as selection aids
 - Lists of proposed magazines and newspapers approved for purchase

b. Selection Criteria

Following are general selection criteria that are to be utilized by all subject area offices in selecting instructional textbooks and supplemental materials:

- i. Instructional materials must be accurate, objective, up-to-date, and present information comprehensively.
- ii. Instructional materials must foster the inclusion of all voices within a global society (racial, ethnic, sexual, cultural, disabled, aged,

religious, etc.) unless the content of the material is typical of society in a specific period of history.

- iii. Instructional materials must be provided which meet the developmental needs of students for whom they are intended.
- iv. Instructional materials must provide for diversity of selections when appropriate.
- v. Instructional materials must provide for excellence of content and physical make-up.
- vi. Instructional materials must support or enhance the approved Howard County curriculum.
- vii. Instructional materials must allow for representation of contrasting points of view or multiple interpretations of content.
- viii. Instructional materials must be free of questions or activities that invade personal or family privacy by requiring students to reveal private, personal or family information such as parental or personal relationships, political beliefs, and religious and moral attitudes.
- ix. Technology-based instructional products must provide all students equivalent access unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the instructional activity, result in undue financial and administrative burdens on the school system, or not meet other specifications.

2. Submission of Proposed Lists

At a regular meeting of the Board of Education, the Superintendent/designee will submit proposed lists of textbooks and media purchasing sources. Copies of proposed lists will be sent to the CRC, which may review any listed materials independently of a community member's request for reconsideration.

3. Review by Community Members

Following submission of proposed lists to the Board of Education, newly recommended textbooks will be placed on public display for a minimum of fifteen (15) working days. Textbook-associated materials will be made available for review on request. In addition, proposed media purchasing sources will be available for examination at the same central location. Community participation will be encouraged.

4. Reevaluation of Proposed Materials

- a. Community members who wish to request reevaluation of proposed textbooks or media purchasing sources will complete a "Request for Reevaluation of Proposed Instructional Materials" form and submit it through the Superintendent/designee to the chairperson of the CRC during the display period. These forms will be available at the Department of Education. A copy of the completed forms will be

transmitted to the Board of Education through the Superintendent of Schools.

- b. Following receipt of the appeal by the chairperson of the CRC, the committee will:
 - i. Consider the material under appeal in relation to the request for reevaluation and established selection criteria.
 - ii. Remove textbooks and media purchasing sources under appeal from the proposed list until all reevaluation requests have been completed.
 - iii. Recommend to the Board of Education through the Superintendent/designee either of the following:
 - Approve material
 - Disapprove material
 - iv. Submit a copy of the CRC's recommendation to the initiator(s) of the request for reevaluation.
- c. Recommendations of the CRC concerning reevaluated materials will be submitted to the Board of Education. The Board will take action on the proposed lists and recommendations of the CRC.
- d. Once Board approval has been given for reevaluated materials, no further reevaluation will be made for at least two years.
- e. The Superintendent of Schools, or designee, will notify the community member requesting reevaluation of the Board's decision.

C. Review and Reevaluation of Materials In Use

1. The principal will make available specific material for review upon community member request and make every effort to resolve the concern at the school level.
2. Following review of the material and a conference with the principal, the community member may file a "Request for Reevaluation of Instructional Materials In Use" form with the principal of the school. These forms will be available at each school and at the Department of Education. A copy of the completed form will be forwarded by the principal to the Superintendent/designee.
3. The Superintendent/designee, upon notification that a satisfactory solution was not reached at the local school level, will refer the matter to the CRC.

4. The CRC will reevaluate the work in consideration of the request and the appropriate selection criteria and make a recommendation to the Superintendent/designee.
 - a. The chair of the CRC will schedule a meeting of the CRC to reevaluate the material in a timely manner. Prior to that meeting:
 - i. The CRC chair will notify the appropriate supervisor, CRC members, and other relevant personnel of the request and the reevaluation date.
 - ii. The appropriate supervisor will obtain sample copies of the material and forward these to the CRC chair.
 - iii. The CRC chair will distribute the sample materials to the CRC members at least two weeks before the scheduled reevaluation.
 - b. The CRC chair will facilitate the reevaluation meeting but not vote. The appropriate supervisor will participate as a voting member; any non-committee participants may not vote. The CRC chair will appoint a committee member to record minutes of the meeting.
 - c. After the meeting, the CRC chair will notify the Superintendent/designee in writing of the committee's recommendation.
 - d. The Superintendent/designee will decide whether to remove or retain the material and notify the initiator of the reevaluation in writing.
5. Further appeals are directed to the Superintendent of Schools.
6. The Howard County Board of Education will serve as the final level of appeal within the Howard County Public School System.
7. Once Board approval has been given for reevaluated materials, no further reevaluation will be made for at least two years.

II. Other Procedures

A. Textbooks

If circumstances require that a textbook be considered for approval outside the general annual procedures, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. The established selection criteria must be met.
2. The standing subject area textbook selection committee or supervisor may recommend a textbook.
3. The recommendation will be reviewed by the appropriate citizen advisory

committee (or sub-committee).

4. If approved by the citizen advisory committee, the textbook may be purchased on a limited basis (one classroom set per school).
5. Any textbook approved by this process must be submitted for regular approval during the next adoption cycle.
6. In cases where more than one set per school is needed, supervisors may submit the title for the Board's approval.

B. Media Center Materials

Materials for media centers may be purchased from the list of approved media purchasing sources maintained by the Media Services office. Materials for media centers not reviewed in approved media purchasing sources may be purchased upon favorable evaluation by three certificated educators, using the "Selection Criteria for Media Center Materials" form. One form including all three signatures is acceptable. A separate form is required for each item purchased. Such materials must be in agreement with established policies and selection criteria.

C. Supplemental Materials

These materials may be purchased using funds budgeted for Materials of Instruction at the school's discretion; however, the material must be consistent with approved policies and established subject area selection criteria.

1. Instructional materials – materials other than approved textbooks, used to supplement instruction and not described elsewhere in this policy are considered supplemental material. This may consist of materials listed in company catalogues as aids, kits, games, and accessories. Also, novels, plays, audio/video recordings, reference materials, resource books, manuals, workbooks, newspapers, etc., that are not associated with an approved textbook are considered supplementary materials.
2. Instructional software – Before purchase, technology materials such as software and online resources must be added to the approved list of software, which is accessed from the school system website. Instructional software and online resources not on the approved list may be added by completing the Software Approval process, which ensures that they conform to established criteria for the content area, Office of Special Education, Office of Educational Technology, and Office of Networks and Technology Support (see Policy 8080).

D. Miscellaneous Sources

Materials not acquired by Department of Education funds--including teacher-made materials, such as Learning Activity Packets (LAPs) and Learning Centers--must have the same quality and accomplish the same purposes as all other types of instructional materials, and be consistent with approved policies, selection criteria, and approved curriculum.

1. Sponsored Materials

Sponsored materials (e.g., materials produced by airlines, dairy councils, oil companies, civic associations, etc.) will be evaluated by the appropriate subject area supervisor according to the criteria approved for all other types of instructional materials. There must not be an attempt to establish the exclusiveness of a particular product, service, or concept. Sponsoring organization(s) must be known in order to identify and evaluate the point of view and promotional content presented. The appearance of the name of the sponsor on approved materials is acceptable if tasteful and factually portrayed.

2. Audio/Video Recordings from Sources Outside the Howard County Public Schools Central AV Library

a. For audio/video recordings that fall in the category of “rental,” or “free or inexpensive,” --including non-rated educational or documentary videos--the following procedures will apply:

- i. Upon receipt, and prior to use with students, the audio/video recording must be evaluated.
- ii. The audio/video recording will be evaluated by those teachers who will use it, and must be approved by the principal. If it conforms to approved policies and criteria, it may be used.
- iii. Teachers making this evaluation will complete a “Selection Criteria for Media Center Materials” form and file it in the school media center.
- iv. All copyright laws must be followed.

b. Videos

- i. Videos, like other supplemental materials, should be used to enhance instruction according to approved curriculum. Schools must be judicious in acquiring and using videos, making certain that they are not substituting their use for more worthwhile experiences or using an entire video when several selected excerpts would serve the instructional purpose more effectively. Rarely should teachers show full-length feature videos during class time.
- ii. The acceptability of a video is determined in part by its rating. This

- rating indicates the age group suitability and nature of the video.
- iii. “R” and “NC-17” rated videos, and non-rated feature videos produced after 1990, may not be shown to classes in Howard County Public Schools; furthermore, PG-13 videos may not be shown in middle or elementary schools. PG rated videos may not be shown to students in Grades PreK-3. PG rated videos may contain some material not suitable for young children. Before showing a PG rated video in grades 4-5 or middle school, teachers must preview the entire video to determine its appropriateness, and be certain that the principal approves of the video’s use. Annual notification of these restrictions should be made to parents and site-based staff.
 - iv. Teachers may, however, show brief, appropriate excerpts from videos excluded by this policy to address an important instructional purpose. The teacher is responsible to ensure that the excerpts conform to this policy and subject area selection criteria.
- c. Digital Video-on-Demand
- i. Curriculum and technology offices will evaluate the product to determine if the provider is a trusted source. A “trusted source” is a publisher and/or distributor that has been determined to consistently provide reliable materials (i.e. aligned with curriculum, age appropriate, accurate and up-to-date).
 - ii. Prior to use with students, each video will be evaluated by those teachers who will use it. If the video meets curricular objectives and is age appropriate, it may be used.

3. Gifts of Instructional Materials

Gifts of books or other instructional materials to a school or the school system must meet the selection standards of the Howard County Public School System and be approved by the appropriate subject area supervisor. The following guidelines are to be followed:

- a. Gifts must be judged by the same subject area selection criteria as other instructional materials.
- b. Those wishing to donate books or other materials must submit a list of titles in advance.
- c. Prospective donors are encouraged to give books or materials from a list prepared by the media specialist or appropriate subject area supervisor.
- d. All gifts will become the property of the Howard County Public School System and may, when declared surplus by the receiving office/school, be transferred to another office/school or removed from use.

- e. Gifts of other kinds are governed by Policy 4010, Donations.
4. Use of Broadcast and Cable Television in the Classroom
- a. Programs used from broadcast and cable television must conform to subject area selection criteria. Its use will conform to the teacher's pre-planned lesson and must support and/or enhance instruction.
 - b. Live television does not give the teacher an opportunity to preview the program prior to use with students and should rarely be used. In the case of covering current events, the teacher must carefully exercise his/her discretion in what is appropriate viewing for the classroom. Consideration must be given to students' age and maturity level. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide follow-up to the viewing so that students understand the event and why they were watching.
 - c. All copyright laws must be followed.

III. History

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