

SELECTION POLICY AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

I. Mission Statement

The Chatham County Board of Education recognizes the importance of providing a variety of instructional materials, equipment, information and supplies, in addition to adopted textbooks, to meet the instructional needs of students. The Board believes the standards for selection and evaluation of materials should be uniform system-wide and allows for the review of materials considered inappropriate through established procedures outlined in this policy.

II. Responsibility for Selection

Responsibility for the selection of instructional media materials is delegated to the professionally trained and certified staff employed by Chatham County Schools. The term instructional media materials include both print and nonprint media (i.e. books, periodicals, video and audio, kits, realia, web sites, subscription databases, and computer software).

Although the selection of materials can involve many people, including principals, teachers, students, supervisors, and community persons, the primary responsibility for coordinating the selection of instructional materials for the media center rests with certified library media personnel. Materials for school classrooms will be selected by the appropriate professional personnel in consultation with the administration, faculty, students and the community. Final decision on purchase will rest with the superintendent or designee. A system level advisory committee will be appointed by the superintendent of his/her designee. A similar advisory committee shall be formed at the school level.

III. Criteria for Selection

Educational suitability is the major criterion for the selection of materials. Professional staff must use educational criteria and professional judgment rather than personal opinions, values, and beliefs in the selection of materials.

A. Instructional materials selected should:

1. support and be consistent with the general educational goals and objectives of the district, the school and the curriculum.
2. be appropriate for the subject area, the age, interests, emotional and social development, maturity and ability levels, and learning styles of the students for whom the materials are selected.

3. provide information to motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make informed judgments in their daily lives.
 4. represent the diversity of religious, ethnic, political, and cultural values held in a pluralistic society.
 5. illustrate historical and contemporary forces in society to enable users to recognize and understand social, economic, personal, and political problems.
 6. provide various points of view about issues, including those considered to be controversial.
- B. Media personnel and media advisory committee members should also consider:
1. technical quality and physical format appropriate for intended use.
 2. scope, arrangement, and organization, relevance of information, special features, and overall value to the collection.

IV. Procedures for Selection

- A. School library media personnel and teachers should evaluate existing resources, assess curriculum needs, and consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids. Materials should be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for weaknesses.
- B. Administrators, faculty, students, district personnel, and community people may make recommendations for purchase.
- C. Donated materials shall meet the criteria outlined in this policy.
- D. Selection is an ongoing process that includes the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials of continuing educational value.
- E. Educational materials such as rental videotapes or DVDs, and privately owned or borrowed resources not purchased by the Chatham County School System, shall meet the criteria outlined in this policy.

V. The Media and Technology Advisory Committee

A media and technology advisory committee appointed by the principal shall be formed at the school level. Chairperson of this committee will be the school library media specialist, along with the Instructional Technology Facilitator, if available. Membership on the committee should include at least one teacher from each area of the curriculum (subject, grade level, or

teaching team), students, and parents. The principal should also serve on the committee. A system level advisory committee appointed by the superintendent or his/her designee shall be created to involve a representative cross-section of teachers, students, parents, school media specialists, administrators, and supervisors.

A. School Level Duties

1. Determine curriculum and student needs and make recommendations for purchase of materials to meet those needs.
2. Evaluate materials being considered for purchase.
3. Review challenged materials and recommend appropriate action to be taken.

B. District Level Duties

1. Evaluate materials considered for purchase and placement in system level collection.
2. Review challenged materials and recommend appropriate action to be taken.

Procedures for Handling Concerns about Educational Materials

The Board of Education adopts the following policy for the review of materials about which concerns have been raised. Any resident, employee, parent, or guardian of a student in the Chatham County School System may express concerns about materials in the district's educational program.

I. Procedures – School Level

Materials shall remain in use during this procedure.

- A. The school official or staff member initially receiving the expression of concern shall listen to the concern and explain the school selection policies, the criteria used for selection of resources, and the procedures involved in review or reconsideration.
- B. If the concern has not been resolved and request is made for the removal, restriction, or inclusion of a resource, the use of the *Statement of Concern about Educational Materials* form shall be explained and given for completion to the person expressing concern. The completed form should be returned to the principal or designee. A copy should be forwarded to the media supervisor.

- C. Upon receipt of a signed *Statement of Concern...* form, the principal or designee shall indicate the date of receipt and within fifteen days refer it to the Media Advisory Committee. The Media Advisory Committee chair shall:
1. inform members of the committee of the receipt of the *Statement of Concern*.
 2. make available the questioned resource for reading, viewing, or listening by the committee members.
 3. arrange a meeting of the Media Advisory Committee within fifteen school days to hear testimony and discuss the questioned resource and reach a decision. Appraisals of questioned resource in professional reviewing sources will be provided as needed.
 4. follow all procedures outlined in this policy.
- D. Upon completion of the review process, the chair of the Media Advisory Committee shall file the report of the committee within five school days with the superintendent and provide copies to all appropriate individuals: person expressing concern, principal, staff member involved, all committee members, and media supervisor. The written report, signed by all members of the committee, accompanied by any written materials used during the proceedings shall be retained on the official record of the case.
- E. After these procedures have been completed, any decision of the Media Advisory Committee may be appealed to the superintendent of Chatham County Schools. If the person requesting reconsideration still feels his/her objections have not been dealt with adequately, he/she may submit a final appeal to the Chatham County Board of Education.

II. Procedures-District Level

- A. A quorum is required at all meetings when a decision is to be made regarding a resource under reconsideration.
- B. Access to a challenged resource shall not be restricted during the review process.
- C. The district review committee chair shall arrange a committee meeting within fifteen days and the committee shall:
1. examine the questioned resource.
 2. discuss the resource in context of the educational program and the educational use of the resource.

3. evaluate the resource according to selection criteria described in this policy.
 4. determine professional acceptance of the resource by reading reviews of the resource, if available
 5. form opinions bases on the resources as a whole rather than on passages or selections taken out of context.
 6. hear testimony from appropriate persons, including the individual(s) expressing the concern, professional staff and students using the resource.
 7. reach a decision within five days about the continued use of the resource and prepare a written report.
 8. notify person expressing concern of the committee's decision
- D. Committee members directly involved in a request for reconsideration shall, for that incident only, be replaced by a member selected by the appropriate body.
- E. The chair of the committee shall notify the questioner of the meeting and invite him/her to be present.
- F. Records of the meeting shall be kept and all required reports filed at the district administrative office.
- G. All meetings of the committee shall be open to the public.
- H. Should a challenge reach the level of the school board, the board chairman, superintendent, and supervisor of media services will agree upon procedures for a formal hearing.

III. Additional Guidelines

- A. The principles and procedures of this selection policy should be reviewed annually with the school staff. The staff shall be reminded that the right to request a review of resources is one granted by policies adopted by the Board of Education.
- B. No parents have the right to determine the reading, viewing, or listening resources for students other than their own children/wards.
- C. The selection policy and statement of concern materials should be readily accessible and familiar not only to media specialists but also to administrators, teachers, office personnel, and media center staff.

STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Resource on which you are commenting:

_____ Book	_____ Audiovisual Resource
_____ Magazine	_____ Newspaper
_____ Technology Resource	_____ Other (specify)

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

Publisher _____ Date of Publication _____

1. What brought this title to your attention?
2. To what part(s) in the work do you object? Please be specific. Cite pages, sections, passages, etc.
3. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this item?
4. Have you read/viewed/listened to the item in its entirety? _____ If not, what parts?
5. In its place, what item of equal educational quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

Signature _____

Please return completed form to the school principal or media specialist.