



Arkansas School For Advanced Studies Northwest Arkansas

Library and Media Policy

Arkansas School For Advanced Studies – Northwest Arkansas ("the School") has developed this policy in accordance with Arkansas Public School Library and Media Act.

Mission:

The Library Program exists to support the philosophical goals of the School by providing students access to a literary collection of renowned works that will feature in or supplement seminar discussions that are a cornerstone of the School's academic model. Access to a world-class library supports the enrichment of the Schools's curriculum and deepens the joy of inquiry and quality of understanding through exposure to diverse literary and media works.

Objective of Selection:

The objective of the School's library materials is to execute, enrich and support the educational program of the School. The School's goal is to allow student's access to literary works that will help expand and stimulate inquiring minds. The School will provide access to media resources to meet the requirements of our seminar-based courses. Access to a wide variety of media resources is critical for the success of the academic program which promotes critical thinking, textual analysis, and deep intellectual discussion across the core disciplines. A wide variety of works, including, but not limited to, literature, film, music and art will be included in the library materials to support instruction of the School's Curriculum. The School's academic program is designed to introduce students to a range of literary works and explore the themes and importance of the content as a fundamental route to the School's instruction.

The School subscribes in principle to the following standards expressed by the American Association of School Librarians:

- **Inquire:** Enable curiosity and initiative by using a systematic instructional-development and information-search process in working with other educators to improve integration of the process into curriculum.
- **Include:** Provide challenging and authentic opportunities that address the needs of the broad range of learners. Establish and maintain a collection of reading

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and information materials in formats that support the diverse development, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of the range of learners and their communities. Feature learning opportunities that include diverse viewpoints. Enabling equitable access to learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for learners' success.

Responsibility of Selections and Challenge of Materials:

The Schools's licensed Library Media Specialist shall have the responsibility and discretion to evaluate library materials. Curriculum needs are considered first and foremost in the selection of library materials and equipment. Selections of materials may involve many individuals such as: the Head of School, teachers, School Library Media Specialist, and curriculum support staff. The Library Media Specialist will collaborate with teachers to select which materials will be used for course materials.

Faculty and students are encouraged to suggest materials to be considered for purchase. The final decision, however, is left to the Library Media Specialist and the Head of School based on the criteria listed below.

Access to the selection material may be obtained by reaching out to the School's Library Media Specialist who can be contacted via phone or email. The procedures outlined in this policy set forth the method to voice concern with selected works.

Selection criteria to consider:

In selecting library materials, the Library Media Specialist will contemplate the School's curricular needs as well as the following criteria:

1. Importance of subject matter;
2. Contribution of works to the curriculum and development and enrichment of students;
3. Literary value of the works;
4. Diversity of materials, with no exclusion based of race, nationality, religion, or political views of the writer;
5. Presentation of materials that explore differing points of view concerning international, national and local issues;
6. Validity permanence, and appropriateness of materials;
7. Differing maturity levels of students;
8. High value of artistic quality and/or literary style;

9. Presentation of varied interests that reflect diverse religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds;
10. Representation of opposing sides of controversial issues to foster development of critical reading, listening, viewing, and thinking skills;
11. Reputation and significance of the author, producer, or publisher;
12. Variety of format;
13. Value commensurate with cost and/or need; and
14. Replacement and/or update of books based on the school's weeding procedure set forth below; and
15. Evaluation of existing collection in consultation with reputable, unbiased, and professionally prepared selection aids.

GIFTS

Materials donated or gifted to the School will be assessed for inclusion in the library according to the same standards set forth for the purchase and acquisition of library materials by the School's Library Media Specialist and either accepted or rejected based on the criteria outlined. Any items determined to be unacceptable will be returned to the donor. Those wishing to contribute materials should consult with the School's Library Media Specialist prior to any fundraising efforts for gifted materials.

Maintenance of Materials, Procedures for Weeding Library Materials, and Relocation of Materials

A library of course-related works will be maintained along with associated resources to augment instructional materials and facilitate independent research. The Library Media Specialist will facilitate the acquisition and storage of media resources and instruct students on best practices for academic online research.

The Library Media Specialist will routinely review the collection in each school library to ensure the continued conformity of the collection to the School's curriculum and mission as well as to ensure maintenance in good condition. Materials that cease to align with the selection criteria, are no longer used, or are damaged beyond repair shall be removed from the collection. A record of materials removed from the collection under the School's weeding procedures shall be maintained for three years following their removal from the collection.

INSPECTION OF MATERIALS

Parents/Guardians, School staff, and students may access the library materials index by requesting the list of works from the School's Library Media Specialist or requesting instructions to access listed works in their Student's portal. Parents or guardians of students currently enrolled in the School may visit the School's library for the purpose of viewing materials by making an appointment with the School's Library Media Specialist. Appointments are granted in accordance with the School's policy regarding visitors.

OPT-OUT PROVISIONS

Parents may restrict their child(ren)'s access to specific library materials by contacting the school's Library Media Specialist and identifying the particular materials. The Library Media Specialist will make note of such restrictions and the Student will sign a document acknowledging their Parent/Gaurdian's preference. Such requests must be made in writing to the School's Library Media Specialist.

Library Materials Challenge Process:

Parent/guardians and employees may challenge the appropriateness of material available in the School's Library/Media Center. The following process is used when a parent or guardian of a student or an employee of the School, wishes to challenge a material available in the School Library.

Definitions:

Petitioner: For purposes of this policy, Petitioner means parents and guardians of students currently enrolled at the School, current Students of the School, and employees of the School.

Reconsideration Committee: Committee appointed by the Head of School to review formal challenges brought forth for the committee to review that reflects the diversity of the School. The Reconsideration Committee is comprised of the following;

- Head of School
- Library Media Specialist
- Teacher(s) from the School
- At least one employee who is knowledgeable about and involved in curriculum design and implementation.

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Reconsideration Committee Packet: Information compiled for each member of the committee and contain copies of the following:

1. Formal Library Reconsideration Request Form
2. Copy of the material being challenge; and
3. Reviews of the material from standard professional and scholarly review sources.

Challenge Procedure

A Petitioner must follow the process as it is set forth in this policy.

1. Before commencing the Library Reconsideration process, the Petitioner must first request to meet with the Library Media Specialist through the Head of School's office.
 - a. Prior to this meeting, the Petitioner(s) will be provided with a copy of this policy and the Library Reconsideration Request Form.
 - b. The Petitioner will then meet with the Library Media Specialist and the Petitioner. At this meeting, the Head of School may also be present.
 - c. The meeting shall be used for the Petitioner to express their concern with a given work and shall also allow the Library Media Specialist to explain the School's determination to include the given work in the School's collection.
2. Upon hearing the Petitioner's concern, the Library Media Specialist, in consultation with the Head of School, shall determine the subject work's inclusion in the library collection and the Petitioner shall be informed of the decision.
3. If the Petitioner is not satisfied after meeting with the School's Library Media Specialist, the Petitioner may complete the Library Reconsideration Request Form ("the Form").
 - a. Prior to submitting the form, the Petitioner must have read and/or reviewed the entire material being challenged and sign the attestation certifying this on the Form. **Submitting the Library Reconsideration Form does not guarantee materials will be removed from the library collection.**
 - b. The Form must be submitted to the Head of School within 5 business days of the parent's receipt of the determination following the preliminary meeting.
 - c. Upon receipt of the Form, the Head of School will determine whether or not to pull the challenged work from the collection during the pendency of the Challenge process.

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If, at any point in the process, the Head of School and/or Library Media Specialist determines the material being challenged is inconsistent with the selection criteria, they may remove the material consistent with the weeding criteria outlined above, thus concluding the formal process. The Petitioner shall be notified if such a conclusion is made.

Formal Reconsideration Process

Guidelines

- A. The Library Reconsideration Form may be submitted beginning the first day of any school year through the last academic school day in March.
- B. Petitioners may not challenge more than one (1) material at a time.
- C. During the Reconsideration Process, no request concerning the same material will be accepted.
- D. No more than four (4) materials may be under reconsideration with the School at any given time and no more than one (1) material may be under reconsideration with the same school at any given time.
- E. Any material challenged under this procedure is ineligible to be challenged again for five (5) school years.
- F. No material shall be removed from use until the final resolution of the Library Reconsideration process has been complete, except upon the determination of the Head of School.
- G. Material will not be removed based on an isolated passage or portion of the work. Instead, each material will be reviewed in its entirety to ensure selected portions are not taken out of context.

After a Petitioner has expressed concerns following the challenge procedure outlined above, the Petitioner may file the Library Reconsideration Form with the Head of School. The Library Consideration Process will proceed as outlined below:

- 1. The Head of School will confirm receipt of the request and provide a copy of the written request to the Library Media Specialist.**
- 2. The Head of School will notify the Executive Director of the request.**
- 3. The Head of School will appoint a Reconsideration Committee within ten (10) school days of receiving the request from the Petitioner.**
 - a. The Head of School may delegate non-committee members to help with scheduling, reporting and communication of committee members including the creation of Reconsideration Committee Packets.

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4. Once the committee has been established, the Head of School will distribute the Reconsideration Committee Packets to committee members.
5. From the day the packets are distributed, the Committee will complete the following tasks within twenty (20) school days:
 - a. Hold at least one (1) meeting;
 - i. All meetings of the Reconsideration Committee are open to the public; however, the public does not have the right to participate in the meeting.
 - ii. The Petitioner will receive notice of the time and location of the meeting.
 - iii. The Petitioner is not required to address the committee directly or required to attend the committee meeting.
 - b. Assess general acceptance of the materials by reading reputable reviews;
 - c. Weigh the material's values against the concerns expressed by the Petitioner, ensuring consideration of the material as a whole;
 - d. Discuss the material with the Committee members in a group setting;
 - e. Determine whether the committee will recommend retention of the material, with or without restriction, relocation of the material within in the School, removal of material from the School, or removal of the material at the School District level; and
 - f. Prepare a report with the committee's findings and recommendations.
6. A Reconsideration Committee may invoke an exception to the twenty (20) school day timeline if the material being challenged is over three hundred (300) pages. If such an exception is invoked, the committee must set a reasonable timeline and notify the Petitioner in writing of the new timeline.
7. Once the Reconsideration Committee has completed their recommendation report, the Head of School will forward the report to the Library Media Specialist, the Executive Director or designee.
8. Upon receipt of the report, the Executive Director or designee, shall review the report to ensure compliance with this policy.
 - a. If the Executive Director, or designee, finds a procedural deficiency, the report shall be returned to the Committee to cure the deficiency within a reasonable time.
 - b. Upon cure of the deficiency or if no deficiency exists, the Executive Director or designee shall forward the report, by certified mail, to the Petitioner within five (5) school days.

9. If the Petitioner is not satisfied with the recommendation of the Committee, an appeal to the Board of Directors may be made by submitting a request in writing to the Executive Director or designee within five (5) school days from the date of the Executive Director's notification to the Petitioner.
10. If no timely request for the appeal is received, the recommendation of the Committee will be immediately implemented.
11. The Library Media Specialist shall maintain copies of all documents related to a challenge under this policy for a minimum of five (5) school years.
 - a. All records related to a challenge under this policy are public records under the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

Appeal of a Reconsideration Committee Recommendation

If a Petitioner files an appeal, the Executive Director shall notify the Head of School that an appeal has been filed. The Head of School shall direct the Library Media Specialist to prepare the School Board Review Packet, containing the following documents:

- The Petitioner's written appeal;
- The Reconsideration Committee's report;
- An itemized listing of the materials included in the Reconsideration Committee Packet; and
- The Petitioner's initial Library Reconsideration Request Form.

The following process will be used;

1. The Executive Director shall provide the Board with the School Board Review Packet within fifteen (15) days of the committee's decision if an appeal has been requested.
 - o The Executive Director may also, at their discretion, include the administration's recommendation regarding the appeal.
2. The request for appeal shall be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, unless the next regularly scheduled meeting is more than thirty (30) days away, in which case a special meeting shall be called.
3. The Board shall vote either to deny the Petitioner's request for appeal or to accept the Petitioner's request for appeal. If the Board votes to deny the Petitioner's request for appeal, there is no further right of appeal and the recommendation of the Reconsideration Committee will be immediately implemented.
4. If the Board votes to accept the Petitioner's request for appeal, the Board may take immediate action to modify the recommendation of the Reconsideration Committee or reject the recommendation of the Reconsideration Committee

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and adopt its own recommendation. If the Board member need additional time to review materials and make a decision after voting to accept the Petitioner's request for appeal, the Board must establish a timeline for the review of the appeal.

5. Following final resolution of the request, the Executive Director shall notify the Head of School.
6. The Executive Director and Library Media Specialist shall maintain copies of all documents related to an appeal under this policy for a minimum of five (5) school years.
 - o All records related to a challenge under this policy are public records under the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.