

Hamilton County Board of Education

Monitoring Annually, in November	Descriptor Title Selection of Instructional Materials (Other than Textbooks)	Descriptor Code 4.402	Issued Date 12/16/04
		Revised	Revised 12/13/18

1 The Board will seek to provide a wide range of instructional materials¹ on varying levels of difficulty,
2 with diversity of appeal, and the presentation of different points of view.

3
4 Teachers, school administrators, and instructional supervisors/specialists will work together to select
5 appropriate high-quality instructional materials. Such materials could include (but are not limited to)
6 books, magazines, newspapers, journals, and video, audio, digital, and web resources.

7
8 Selection of instructional materials will be based on the criteria listed below and should be
9 continuously re-evaluated in relation to changing curriculum content, pedagogical research, and the
10 needs of students, teachers, and administrators.

11
12 All resources used during a course of study or in conjunction with school-wide activities will be openly
13 disclosed to parents/guardians and other stakeholders sufficiently in advance of their use with students
14 for parents to request an alternate assignment should they have a concern about the selected materials.
15 (See note below regarding parental disclosure for Library Collection and Optional Materials.)
16 Alternate assignments will receive the same level of instructional and assessment rigor as the primary
17 assignment.

18
19 Instructional materials prescribed within the established curricula for Advanced Placement, dual
20 enrollment, dual credit and International Baccalaureate Programme courses are on a post-secondary
21 level and are considered appropriate for this level of academic endeavor. Enrollment in these courses
22 constitutes acceptance of the instructional program. Alternate assignments will not generally be
23 available for this level of coursework.

24
25 The Director of Schools, or a designee, will establish an administrative procedure for review and
26 selection of materials subject to this policy. As set forth below, particular attention will be paid to
27 addressing the
28 suitability of instructional materials that include content which might be considered sensitive-offensive to
29 community standards by
30 parents or students (for example, materials that contain coarse language, graphic violence, explicit
31 sexual content, illegal use of drugs or alcohol). The Director of Schools, or a designee, will also
32 establish a procedure for the reconsideration of approved materials as may be requested by parents or
33 staff members.

33 CRITERIA FOR SELECTION REVIEW OF MATERIAL

3334 The Board recognizes that some materials, even if they have educational merit, may not be
3335 suitable for inclusion in the instructional program of the school or in the library. When initially
3336 selecting materials, accepting donations of materials, or reviewing materials for their continued
3337 use per Board Pol. No. 4.403, the administration will consider the following criteria:

- 3435 • Educational purpose (as defined by state standards)
- 3536 • Contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interests of the students
- 3637 • Appropriateness to social, emotional, and intellectual level of intended audience

- 1 • Contribution the materials makes to the breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial
- 2 issues.
- 3 • High degree of potential user appeal
- 4 • High artistic quality and/or literary style
- 5 • Quality and variety of format
- 6 • Value commensurate with cost and/or need
- 7 • Timeliness or permanence of the content.

8.8 The extent to which the content may be considered offensive to community standards on the basis of profane language, graphic depictions of violence or sex, etc., provided, however, that otherwise offensive materials may still be used if their relative literary value, as measured in part by the criteria above, outweighs the offensiveness of the content, the further provided that the judgment of the Board, acting per Board Pol. No. 4.403, shall be final.

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9 **LIBRARY COLLECTION AND OPTIONAL MATERIALS**

10 Parental disclosure and prior notice does not include books located in the school library or classroom
 11 that are intended to provide optional reading material on each student's individual reading level. These
 12 books will continually be monitored, and no donated materials will be added into the library collection
 without consideration of the criteria above; however, there may be sensitive content contained in these
 books

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13 that was not previously reviewed by school personnel. Parents should alert the administration about
 14 any sensitive content that is found in these optional materials. Administration will then undertake the
 15 reconsideration process as outlined in Policy 4.403. In the event the Administration or the Board
 determines that a work is offensive but nevertheless offers literary value, then steps will be taken to
 advise parents or guardians when their students have accessed any such material.

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Hamilton County Board of Education

Meeting Annually in November	Describe Title Reconsideration of Instructional Materials and Textbooks	Describe Code 4.003	Issued Date 12/16/94
		Revised	Revised 02/23/08

- 1 A. The Board supports principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the
2 Constitution of the United States and expressed in the *Library Bill of Rights of the American*
3 *Library Association.*
- 4 B. The Board, though it is ultimately responsible for all instructional material purchased, recognizes
5 the student's right of free access to many different types of materials. The Board also recognizes
6 the right of teachers and administrators to select instructional materials and to make those materials
7 available in the schools. It is therefore the policy of the Board to require instructional materials
8 selected for and used in the schools to be in accord with the following:
- 9
10
 - 11 1. Instructional materials shall be chosen for values of interest and enlightenment of all students in
12 the community. Instructional materials shall not be excluded because of the race, nationality,
13 political or religious views of the writer or of its style and language.
 - 14 2. Every effort will be made to provide materials that present many points of view concerning the
15 problems and areas of our times—international, national, and local. Instructional materials of
16 sound factual authority shall not be proscribed or removed from library shelves or classrooms
17 because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval/disapproval.
 - 18 3. Censorship of instructional materials will be discouraged in order to maintain the school's
19 responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
 - 20 4. Such media (films, videos, electronic media, etc.) should be used only to supplement, not
21 supplant, other instruction. There must be a stated instructional purpose related to approved
22 curriculum objectives to support the use of any media and any media in excess of 10 minutes
23 must be pre-approved by the Principal.
- 24
- 25 C. In accordance with number three above, the Board has adopted the following policy when dealing
26 with censorship above or censorship of instructional materials:
- 27
 - 28 1. That the final decision concerning controversial instructional materials shall rest with the Board
29 after careful examination and filtration of the instructional materials with school faculties or
30 anyone else the Board wishes to involve;
 - 31 2. That no parent, group of parents, or non-school group has the right to determine the
32 instructional materials for students other than their own children;
 - 33 3. The Board does, however, recognize the right of an individual parent to request that his child
34 not have to use a given instructional material without being penalized academically, provided a
35 written request is made to the Principal;
 - 36 4. Any parent or other citizen who wishes to suggest review or reconsideration of the use of any
37 instructional material in the school must make such a request in writing through the Principal of
38 the school where the material is used.
- 39
- 40 D. Complainers who bypass the review/reconsideration procedure and who initially seek action from
41 the Board or Director of Schools shall be informed of the policy and instructed first to seek

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1 solution to their problem with the involved teacher, librarian, or Principal. Notwithstanding any other
 2 Board policy, no one will be allowed to address the Board regarding the content of any book or other
 3 instructional material until the procedures of this policy have been exhausted. When a complaint is
 4 made, the following procedure is to be followed:

- 5 1. Provide the complainant with a copy of this policy and make no commitments.
- 6 2. Request the complainant to submit a "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials"
- 7 form.
- 8 3. When a complaint is filed, the Principal and teacher will review the validity of the complaint.
- 9 The complaint will then be processed through the following steps to determine a final
- 10 resolution.
- 11 4. Inform the Director of Schools or a designee.
- 12 5. Keep challenged materials available for use and review during the reconsideration process.
- 13 6. Upon receipt of the completed form, the Principal requests review of the challenged material
- 14 within fifteen working days by an ad hoc materials review committee composed as follows:
- 15 a. Appropriate Executive Director and/or Director of Teaching and Learning (will serve as
- 16 the chair of the committee);
- 17 b. President of the PTA/PTO or other parent organization of the school involved;
- 18 c. Principal of a county school serving the same grade levels as the school in which the
- 19 complaint was made;
- 20 d. ~~Board member (to be appointed by the Board Chair);~~
- 21 e. ~~NCEA Representative from the school.~~

22 7. The review committee takes the following steps after receiving the challenged materials:

- 23 a. Reads, views, or listens to the material in its entirety.
- 24 b. Consider the material in light of the criteria set forth in
 25 Board Pol. No. 4.402, Criteria for Review of
 26 Materials. Checks general acceptance of the material by reading recognized evaluative
 27 reviews.
- 28 c. Holds a hearing including complainant and any affected school employee.
- 29 d. Determines the extent to which the material supports the curriculum.
- 30 e. Judges the material for its strengths and values and/or objectionable content.
- 31 f. Presents decision in writing to Principal, to the complainant, to affected school
- 32 employees, and to the Director of Schools (for information).

33 8. If the complainant or any affected school employee wishes further action after receiving the
 34 decision of the committee, an appeal may be made to the Board within fifteen (15) working
 35 days of the date of committee decision. This appeal should be made in writing to the Director
 36 of Schools who shall schedule the matter on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the
 37 Board. The Board has the discretion to sustain the review committee on the record or to grant a
 38 new hearing. If no appeal is filed within the above deadline, the determination of the review
 39 committee shall be final.

40 The director of schools, or a designee, shall be responsible for the implementation of procedures
 41 concerning complaints regarding instructional materials and textbooks.

42 NOTE: This policy includes textbooks, library books, reference books, newspapers, magazines, films,
 43 audio or videotapes, live or recorded radio or television programs, computer programs, etc. All
 44 instructional materials and textbooks are covered within this policy.

45 Legal References: