



INSTRUCTIONAL AND LIBRARY-MEDIA MATERIALS SELECTION

The Regional School Unit-24 (RSU) Board (RSUB) is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of RSU schools, including the provision of instructional materials and maintenance of library-media resources that support the RSU's mission statement.

While the RSUB retains its authority to approve the selection of instructional materials, it recognizes and appreciates the educational expertise of its professional staff and the value of staff being involved in the recommendation of instructional materials. The RSUB hereby delegates' responsibility for the selection of instructional materials and library-media resources to the professionally trained staff employed by the RSU, subject to the criteria and procedures for selection and the RSU's policy on challenged materials, as described below.

The Superintendent shall establish a system for the selection of instructional materials, including procedures to establish an orderly process for the review and recommendation of instructional materials. The Superintendent will be responsible for overseeing the purchase of instructional materials within budgetary parameters set by the RSUB. The RSUB requires the Superintendent to report on progress made in aligning instructional materials with curriculum development and evaluation in support of the content standards contained in Maine's system of Learning Results (MSLR). RSU schools shall maintain a library-media program that includes books and other print materials, multimedia materials, online Internet resources and information technology that support the curriculum. As with instructional materials, the RSUB delegates' responsibility for selection of library-media materials and technology and Internet resources to the RSU's professionally trained staff, subject to the criteria and procedures for selection and the RSU policy on challenged materials described below.

Definitions:

"Instructional materials" includes textbooks and other print materials, software and other electronic materials, online/Internet resources (including access), supplies and other materials to support instruction in all subject areas of the MSLR.

"Library-media resources" include books, print materials, online/Internet resources (including access), multimedia materials and information technology that, as part of the library-media program, support the school system's curriculum and/or the growth and development of it's students.

Objectives of Selection:

The RSUB recognizes that it is the primary objective of instructional materials to implement and support the curriculum, and of library-media resources to extend and enrich the educational programs of the RSU schools. Quality instructional materials and library-media resources are essential to student learning. In preparing students to meet the content standards of the NSLR, in supporting the achievement of the RSU's educational goals and objectives, and in providing enrichment opportunities that expand students' interests and contribute to a desire for lifelong learning, it is the responsibility of the instructional program and the library-media centers of RSU schools to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.

Criteria for Selection - Instructional and library-media materials selected should:

- A. Support achievement of the content standards of the MSLR;
- B. Support the goals and objectives of the RSU's educational programs;
- C. Enrich and support the RSU curriculum;
- D. Take into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of RSU students;
- E. Foster respect and appreciation for cultural diversity and varied opinions;
- F. Give comprehensive, accurate and balanced representation to all RSU students in all subjects, including leadership and the arts, while acknowledging the contributions of ethnic, religious and cultural groups to our American heritage;
- G. Present a balance of opposing sides of controversial issues to enable students to develop a capability for critical analysis;
- H. Stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards;
- I. Provide a background of information that will enable RSU students to make intelligent decisions in their daily lives; and
- J. Respect the constraints of the RSU's budget.
- K. Factors that must be considered are accuracy and currency of material, importance of the subject matter, quality of writing and production, and reputation and significance of the author, artist or composer.
- L. In evaluating software, multimedia materials and online/Internet resources, additional factors that should be considered include purpose for use, content, format (degree of interactivity or student involvement), appropriate use of graphics, sound and animation, feedback provided and ease of use.

Procedures for Selection

Meeting the needs of the RSU schools, based on knowledge of the curriculum and the existing collections of instructional and library-media materials must always be the highest priority. Basic learning materials, i.e., those that are the predominant instructional materials used by most members of the class, are used for a significant portion of the course or receive major emphasis during a course, and/or are essential to student achievement of content standards of the MSLR, are to take priority in the selection process.

Prior to recommending materials for purchase, professional staff will ensure the instructional materials selection guidelines have been considered, and are being met.

Whenever possible, purchase of non-print materials and multimedia, Internet and technology resources shall be made only after personal evaluation by the appropriate professional staff. Reviewing aids may be used in lieu of personal evaluation.

Multiple copies of outstanding and much-in-demand materials should be purchased, if resources allow. Worn or missing standard items should be replaced periodically. Out-of-date and/or no-longer-useful materials should be removed from RSU schools.

Donated Materials

Gift materials must be evaluated by the same criteria as purchased materials, and are to be accepted or rejected in accordance with RSU policy on gifts and donations.

Parental Authority

A student's parent/guardian may upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of any RSU curriculum. The Superintendent is responsible for developing and implementing procedures for providing access to instructional material within a reasonable time after such a request is made.

The RSUB recognizes that the final authority as to what materials an individual student will be exposed rests with that student's parents or guardians. However, at no time will the wishes of one child's parents to restrict his/her reading or viewing of a particular item infringe on other parents' rights to permit their children to read or view the same material.

Library-media center materials will not be removed from the collection because of criticism except in accordance with RSU policy or RSUB approval.

Challenged Materials

Despite the care taken to select materials for student and teacher use and the qualifications of the persons who select the materials, the RSUB recognizes that objections may be raised occasionally by students, parents, school staff or community members.

In the event a complaint is made, the following procedures will apply:

- A. The complaint shall be heard first by the person providing the materials in question.
- B. If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant shall be referred to the Building Administrator (BA) and requested to fill out the "Instructional and Library-Media Materials Challenge Form." A copy of the form will be forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Curriculum.

- C. The Assistant Superintendent shall appoint a Material Review Committee (MRC) composed of the following persons to review the complaint, one BA at the appropriate grade level, one classroom teacher, the Director of Curriculum and one RSUB member.
- D. MRC members shall: read and examine the materials referred to them; check general acceptance of materials by reading reviews; weigh values and faults against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not necessarily on passages or portions pulled out of context. They will meet to discuss the material and to prepare a written report to the Superintendent stating the opinion(s) of the MRC.
- E. The Superintendent will review the MRC's report and inform the complainant of the results.
- F. No materials shall be removed from use until after the Superintendent releases the MRC's decision.
- G. The MRC's decision may be appealed to the RSUB. The RSUB may set aside a portion of a regular meeting or call a special review meeting for the purpose of receiving testimony from representatives of the various points of view.
- H. The material in question shall be:
 - 1. Reviewed objectively;
 - 2. Evaluated in terms of the needs and interest of students, RSU, curriculum and community;
 - 3. Considered in the light of differing opinions; and
 - 4. Reviewed in light of the criteria for initial selection and purpose as provided herein.

The RSUB will announce its decision in writing not later than the conclusion of the next regular meeting following the review meeting.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 1001 (10-A); 1055 (4); 4002
Ch. 125 §§ 9.01, 9.03 (Me. Dept. of Ed. Rule)
P.L. 107-110 § 1061 (No Child Left Behind Act)

Cross Reference: IJJ-E – Challenge of Instructional Materials Form

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