## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER COLLECTIONS

School library media specialists are responsible for the review, evaluation, and selection of the school library media collection. They are guided by the system-level selection criteria that embody the philosophy and procedures set forth in national and state documents. Library media specialists work cooperatively with administrators and teachers to provide resources that represent diverse points of view, stimulate growth in thinking skills, and promote the overall educational program. Library media collections are developed to meet both curricular and personal needs. To ensure that these needs are met, library media specialists apply selection criteria and use recommended selection tools. All purchases, including gifts, should meet the same selection standards.

The collection development policy reflects the philosophy and goals of the school system and supports the principles of intellectual freedom described in *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs,* and other position statements on intellectual freedom from the American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians. Berlin Public Schools comply with federal laws regarding Internet safety and protection by requiring a filtering proxy server on its wide area network.

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR LIBRARY MEDIA MATERIALS

### Appropriate for recommended levels

Library media materials should be accessible to students of varied abilities, and meet informational and interest needs of all students.

### Pertinent to the curriculum and the objectives of the instructional program

Library media materials should be selected on the basis of assessed curricular needs. Materials should reflect the identified learning outcomes of the instructional program.

### Accuracy of content

Library media materials should present facts in an objective manner. Authority of the author, organization, publisher/producer should be a consideration in selection. Materials should contain facts which are presented in a manner appropriate to the level of the students.

### Reflective of the pluralistic nature of a global society

Library media materials should provide a global perspective and promote diversity as a positive attribute to our society. It is important to include materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures.

**Free of bias and stereotype**

Materials should reflect the basic humanity of all people and be free of stereotypes, caricatures, distorted dialect, sexual bias, and other offensive characteristics. Library materials concerning religious, social, and political content should inform rather than indoctrinate.

**Representative of differing viewpoints on controversial subjects**

Students have the right to information on both sides of a controversial issue. By having access to a variety of resources students will have the knowledge base to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.

**Appropriate format to effectively teach the curriculum**

Library media materials should be available in a variety of formats, e.g., print, nonprint, electronic, multimedia, to meet the needs and learning styles of a diverse student population.

**Recent copyright date as appropriate to the subject**

Library media materials should be assessed for currency of the information as it relates to the content and purpose of the item

**Acceptable in literary style and technical quality**

Literary quality, technical merit, physical arrangement, and aesthetic characteristics should be considered as integral components in the evaluation of all media formats.

**Cost effective in terms of use**

Library media materials should be evaluated for cost effectiveness in terms of accessibility, projected use, and durability.

**Appropriate for students with special needs**

Library media materials should be provided to meet curricular needs and the individual needs, interests, and learning styles of all students at all levels.

**IMPLEMENTING THE SELECTION CRITERIA**

Library media specialists take leadership in communicating to the educational community the purpose and scope of the selection policy. The responsibility for coordinating the selection of library materials rests with the library media specialist who seeks faculty, student, and parent

recommendations for purchase of library media materials. Favorable reviews from professional review journals and authoritative selection references should be used when developing library media collections. Wherever possible, direct examination of materials is advisable to ensure that they meet selection criteria.

**Essential Curriculum and Collection Development**

The major emphasis of collection development should be to provide materials which meet curricular needs. To assess these needs, knowledge of the curriculum and access to these guides is important. It is recommended that a copy of each curriculum guide be housed in the library media center. The library media specialist needs to be familiar with changes and additions to the curriculum and how they affect collection development. The School Board and administration entrust the responsibility for selecting books and materials to the school library media specialist.

**PROCEDURES FOR THE SELECTION OF MATERIALS**

In selecting materials for purchase, the school library media specialist evaluated the existing collection and considers recommendations from the following sources:

1. Reputable professional selection aids including recommended lists, book, and materials reviews, and journals or publications such as "The School Library Journal" and "Booklist."

2. Parents, students, school personnel, other library media specialists, and community members.

3. Conferences, courses, workshops, and other kinds of materials review sessions.

**CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

1. Materials considered for purchase are selected because of the content and value of each work as a whole. First consideration is given to the needs of the school, based on knowledge of the curriculum and of the existing collection. Materials for the library media center are considered on the basis of:

   a) overall purpose
   b) timeliness
   c) importance of the subject matter
   d) balance of viewpoints
   e) readability and popular interest
   f) diversity
   g) authoritativeness
   h) reputation of the publisher/producer
   i) reputation and significance of the author/artist/composer
   j) format and price

Computer and audio-visual software will also be considered on the basis of acceptable technical quality.

**GIFTS**

The library media centers welcome books and other resources from individuals and organizations with the understanding that the final determination as to ultimate use will be made by the library media specialist on the basis of the preceding selection criteria.

**CONSIDERATION FOR SELECTION OF PRINT MATERIALS**

There are general selection criteria which apply to all library media materials. The following media formats require additional considerations.

**Books**

Due to high costs of materials, it is important to examine books with the following additional criteria in mind before purchasing.

- Illustrations and layout
- Type style and text density
- Paper quality
- Durability of bindings
- Readability and interest levels
- Indexing

**Paperbacks**

Paperbacks are an inexpensive way to supplement the library media collection for duplication of titles, in-depth studies, special projects, and leisure reading. It is recommended that first copies of picture books be hardbound.

**Periodicals**

Periodicals support the curriculum and provide leisure reading for students. Professional review journals and library periodicals for instruction may be considered for purchase. Consider access to full test online periodical databases, e.g., ProQuest, Ebscohost.

**Newspapers**

Newspapers may be ordered as needed. Consider access to full text online newspaper databases, e.g. *Manchester Union Leader, New York Times.*

**Pamphlets**

Pamphlets that support the curriculum may be added to the collection. It is recommended that they be organized in an information file by subject rather than fully cataloged. Apply general selection criteria.

**Reference**

A variety of Reference materials in both print and electronic formats provide comprehensive information in both general and subject-specific areas. They also serve as access tools to information from other sources including school, public, academic, and electronic collections.

The following points need to be considered:

- Cost effective in terms of projected use
- Authority
- Arrangement and indexing
- User-friendly

## SELECTION OF NONPRINT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

### Considerations for Selection of Nonprint Materials

The criteria for selection of nonprint materials are essentially the same as for print materials. The quality of auditory and visual presentation should be considered as well as accuracy of information and the appropriateness of format.

Nonprint materials should:

- Promote instructional goals and support the curriculum
- Provide a variety of media formats to meet the needs of the curriculum
- Present content in appropriate format and acceptable technical quality

### Consideration for Selection of Electronic Resources

The criteria for selection of electronic resources are essentially the same as for print materials. Electronic resources such as CD-ROM, computer software, and online services provide greater access to information. Access to these fee-based database services should be 24-hours a day with remote access from home. Availability of network versions and site license agreements are also factors in selection.

Electronic resources should:

- Provide learner control through flexible pacing, variable difficulty, and optional branching and linking
- Provide information that is accurate and reliably maintained

- Provide organization, searching capabilities, and navigation tools to enhance information retrieval
- Provide record keeping and management options, if applicable
- Provide readable text, attractive graphics, and an appealing layout
- Have easy-to-understand, comprehensive documentation
- Be user friendly
- Provide 24-hour access with remote connection from home

**Access to Internet Resources**

Access to the Internet is a right and privilege granted to all students by the Berlin Public Schools. Through the annual notification process, parents or guardians will receive a booklet of all behavior expectations, including appropriate and safe use of the Internet. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. (*See Berlin School System Internet Policy)*

**COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT**

The school library media program is an integral part of the instructional process. As part of the instructional process, the development of the collection is based upon the belief that all students, teachers, administrators, and support staff should have open access to all forms of information relevant to learning and teaching curriculum. To ensure access to quality library media collections, a systematic process for assessing and building library media collections is essential.

Collection development is the ongoing process of identifying strengths and weaknesses of library media collections in terms of students needs. Collection development demonstrates that funds are being spent wisely and that library media collections meet the informational needs of the curriculum as well as independent reading and viewing needs of students. The three components involved in the collection development process are:

**Analysis of the School Community**

In order to be responsive to the unique needs of each school, a collection development process must be based upon an analysis of student needs at that particular school. There will be some similarities among library medial collections across the district, but the profile provided by this analysis will ensure that the specific needs of each school are addressed.

**Assessment of the Library Media Collection**

Collection assessment is needed to determine the quality of the existing library media collection. It is an organized method for collecting statistics on the age of the collection, the number of titles in the collection, and the ability of the collection to meet curricular needs.

**Selection and Acquisition of Materials**

The selection and acquisition of new library media materials will be based upon the needs of each library media center as determined by the collection assessment process and upon the availability of funding.

**INVENTORY PROCEDURES**

**Weeding Library Media Materials**

A good collection development plan must include weeding. The process of weeding is a key part of assessing the collection. It helps keep collections relevant, accurate, and useful; and it facilitates more effective use of space in the library media center.

Library media materials should be weeded if they:

- Are in poor physical condition
- Have not been circulated in the last five years
- Are outdated in content, use, or accuracy (Copyright date should be considered; however do not make a decision to weed based solely on the copyright date of the material. Some older material may be considered classic or may be of great historical value to your collection).
- Are biased or portray stereotypes
- Duplicate information which is no longer in heavy demand
- Are superseded by new or revised information
- Are outdated and have unattractive formats, designs, graphics, and illustrations
- Contain information which is inaccessible because they lack a table of contents, adequate indexing, and searching capabilities
- Are not selected in accordance with general selection criteria

**Withdrawing Library Media Material**

The decision to withdraw materials from the library media collection is one which is made by the library media specialist. Teachers and other faculty members may be invited to review the items marked for withdrawal. All withdrawn materials will be disposed of at the discretion of the library personnel.

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