

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND MATERIALS SELECTION

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for continuous review and improvement of the Anoka-Hennepin Independent School District educational curriculum.

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Curriculum development shall be directed toward the fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the education program of the school district.

### III. DEFINITIONS

**Instructional Materials:** those items that are read, listened to, viewed, manipulated, or experienced by students as part of the instructional process. They may be consumable or non-consumable and may vary greatly in the kind of student response they stimulate. Instructional materials include, but are not limited to: textbooks, teacher manuals, kits, games, computer software, electronic information sources, apparatus, media collections, and other print and non-print materials.

**Curriculum:** a written plan with alignment of standards to benchmarks, essential questions, an assessment plan, instructional resources and strategies, and time allocations for emphasis and pacing for the content to be taught.

**Instruction:** a teacher-led process, which transforms well-planned curriculum into student learning. Instruction is standards-focused teaching for the purpose of providing meaningful learning experiences that enable all students to master academic content and achieve personal goals.

**Assessments:** diagnostic, formative or summative tools used to gather information about the student's performance on the standards taught.

**Evaluation:** the process of making judgments about the level of students' understanding or performance.

**Standard:** a statement of what the student will be able to know, understand and do.

**Benchmark:** a clear, specific description of knowledge or skills the student should acquire by a particular point in the student's schooling.

**Core Instructional Materials:** resources recommended through a District process, approved by the School Board, and used by teachers to provide a required common content for students to achieve intended learning.

**Supplementary Materials:** resources determined by teachers and administrators, as monitored by the Superintendent or designee, which supplement the core materials, and provide for different student needs as required to meet the intended student learning.

**Differentiation:** the process teachers use to plan learning experiences, which intentionally respond to learner differences. Students would have opportunities to work at their levels of readiness (assessed levels of skills and knowledge), in preferred and varied learning modes/styles, and engage their interests in order to achieve curricular goals.

#### **IV. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

The School Board is accountable for selection of instructional materials, and as a policymaking body, assigns responsibility to the professional staff, as follows:

A. The Superintendent, through a designee, shall be responsible for curriculum development and for determining the most effective way of conducting research on the school district's curriculum needs and establishing a long range curriculum development program. The Superintendent, and/or a designee, shall be responsible for instructional materials review and selection as well as submitting recommended options for School Board consideration and adoption. The Superintendent's final recommendation for materials selection shall be consistent with Board policies, as well as federal and state laws and rules. Timelines shall be determined by the Superintendent that will provide for periodic reviews of each curriculum area.

It shall also be the responsibility of the Superintendent to keep the school board informed of all state-mandated curriculum changes, as well as recommended discretionary changes and to periodically present recommended modifications for school board review and approval.

The Superintendent shall develop guidelines and directives to implement school board policy relating to curriculum development.

B. Principals are responsible for assuring that materials are being used in classroom instruction in accordance with the District policies. If supplementary materials are considered for use at the school or classroom level, those materials must meet all criteria for selection referenced in Section V of this policy and receive the approval from the Superintendent or designee.

C. Teachers are responsible for participating in and providing input to the review and selection process. Once materials are adopted, teachers must understand the content and application of these materials and use the materials to ensure learning.

D. Administrators responsible for Curriculum and Instruction shall provide opportunities to parents and students to review and give input on text/material evaluations. Once materials are adopted, staff development will be provided so that all teachers can successfully implement and differentiate new instructional materials.

E. A systems accountability committee shall provide assistance at the request of the Superintendent or designee. The advisory committee membership shall be a reflection of the community and, to the extent possible, shall reflect the diversity of the district and its learning sites, and shall include parent, teacher, support staff, student, community residents, and administration representation.

F. Selection of library materials is governed by the Library Media Materials Selection Policy.

## **V. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

Professional staff shall evaluate instructional materials based on the District, state and federal requirements, District Mission Statement, Core Values, Vision Statements and strategic direction, curriculum adoption process, and grade-to-grade connectivity. Once materials have met these threshold criteria, then staff shall consider the materials based on the following criteria:

- A. Be appropriate for the age, social development, and maturity of the users.
- B. Meet the interests, abilities, learning styles, and differentiated needs of the users.
- C. Consider the needs of the diversity of ethnic, political, cultural, and religious values held by the District's community and the pluralistic society at large.
- D. Support areas of lifetime success, such as academics, character, physical and mental health, leadership, and service.
- E. Recognize various points of view.
- F. Foster information literacy and enhance student learning through technology.
- G. Illustrate the contributions made by various groups to our national heritage and the world.
- H. Stimulate growth in factual knowledge and critical thinking.
- I. Recognize reading, writing, math, and science as a foundation in all content areas.
- J. Provide support for meaningful assessment and progress measures.
- K. Strive to be free from bias, errors, and omissions.

Within the ongoing process of curriculum development, the following needs shall be addressed:

- A. Provide for articulation of courses of study from pre-kindergarten through adult learners.
- B. Identify essential standards for each course and at each level.
- C. Provide for continuing evaluation of programs for the purpose of attaining school district objectives.
- D. Provide a program for ongoing monitoring of student progress.
- E. Provide for specific, particular, and special needs of all members of the student community.
- F. Integrate required and elective course standards in the scope and sequence of the district curriculum.
- G. Meet all requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education and other state and federal laws.

Age Appropriate Materials

The selection of both core instructional and supplementary materials must consider reputable review sources or industry-adopted rating systems to determine the age appropriateness of the materials. As a general statement, the School Board does not approve of the use of materials that rating systems, such as the Motion Picture Association of America, recommend as inappropriate for certain age groups. In the case where industry-adopted rating systems do not exist, consultation with reputable review sources shall be conducted to guide a decision on age-appropriateness.

In the event that the use of the materials is deemed of significant value to the curriculum, but ratings or reviews place the materials outside the age range of the proposed student audience, permission must be obtained from the Superintendent or designee for inclusion as a core instructional or supplementary material. This statement applies to materials in all formats, rated or unrated.

In any case where materials selected may be of questionable fit for some students in the intended audience, educators shall consult with a principal regarding parental notification and potential options for alternatives if appropriate.

Parental / Community Review of Curriculum and Instructional Materials

The School Board recognizes the right of district residents, parents and guardians of district students, adult students and district employees to examine instructional resources, and the responsibility of individual parents to monitor resources selected for their children. Such persons may require that specific instructional resources be excluded or restricted for their child. The school personnel will provide reasonable alternative instruction.

Parents can examine/view the materials at school sites or the district media services office. Parents should call ahead to arrange to have materials available and prepared for their review.

**VI. RECONSIDERATION OF CORE INSTRUCTIONAL OR SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS**Statement of Policy

Any employee, resident or parent/guardian of a student of the Anoka-Hennepin School District may formally request the reconsideration of instructional materials on the basis of appropriateness.

Informal Request for Reconsideration

The school receiving a complaint regarding instructional materials shall try to resolve the issue informally.

The principal or educator shall explain to the questioner the school's selection procedure,

criteria, and qualifications of those selecting the resource.

The principal or educator shall explain the particular place the questioned material occupies in the education program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use.

A parent/guardian may request that a material be restricted from his/her child, and a reasonable alternative experience shall be provided by the school staff.

If the questioner wishes to file a formal request for reconsideration, a copy of the District's Instructional Materials Selection Policy and a Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form shall be given to the questioner.

#### Request for Formal Reconsideration

Each school will keep and make available Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials forms. All formal objections to instructional materials must be made on these forms.

The Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form shall be signed by the questioner and filed with the school's principal.

All reconsideration requests shall be presented to the building principal or educator. The party receiving the complaint shall notify the following people:

- Building principal
- Central Office administrator with instructional oversight
- Department chairperson / Team or grade leader (if applicable)
- Teacher (if applicable)

The request for reconsideration shall be referred to a reconsideration committee at the school level for reevaluation of the resource.

Access to the material in question shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process, unless the Superintendent has determined that removal is warranted due to clear violation of this policy.

#### School Reconsideration Committee

Upon receipt of a request for formal reconsideration of instructional material, the principal shall:

- Appoint a reconsideration committee including the following membership as appropriate:
  - One representative of district administration
  - One representative of building-level administration
  - One member of the school teaching staff
  - One representative of the library media program

- Three members representing the school community
- Two student representatives (if appropriate)
- Name a convener / facilitator of the reconsideration committee.
- Schedule the first committee meeting within 10 school calendar days after the complaint is received.

The reconsideration committee may choose to consult District support staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge.

The reconsideration committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in this policy.

The reconsideration committee shall:

- Read or view the challenged material in its entirety;
- Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the material;
- Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context;
- Discuss the challenged material in the context of the educational program;
- Discuss the challenged material with the individual questioner when appropriate;
- Prepare a written report with the committee's recommendation to retain or remove the material. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
- A minority report may also be filed in the case of dissenting opinions.
- The written reports shall be retained by the school principal with copies forwarded to the Superintendent.

#### District-Level Review

Upon receipt of the building committee's reports, the Superintendent will convene an ad-hoc District Materials Review Committee consisting of appropriate employee representation. The Superintendent will also appoint a facilitator for the meetings.

The role and purpose of a District Materials Review Committee will be to:

- Review the recommendations from the building committee.
- Confirm that proper procedures were adhered to at the building-level.
- Determine what, if any, impact the building recommendation may have on the material if in existence in any other site(s).
- Make a final determination to uphold or reject the building committee's recommendations on the material in question.
- Communicate the decision to the Superintendent in writing.
- Communicate the decision to the principal that facilitated the building committee.

The Superintendent will both:

- Notify the questioner of the decision in writing no later than 10 working days of notification of the Committee's decision.
- Notify the School Board, in writing, of the decision no later than 10 working days after being informed of the Committee's decision.

#### First Appeal

An appeal may be filed by the original questioner within 10 working days of the receipt of the district's decision.

#### Special Committee

If appealed, the School Board Chair will appoint a Special Committee that will conduct a formal review of materials including the work conducted by previous bodies to date. This committee will vote to sustain or reject the previous decision. A tie vote will sustain the previous decision. The decision of the Special Committee shall be delivered in writing to the School Board and to the original questioner within 5 working days of a decision.

#### Second Appeal

The original questioner may appeal the decision of the Special Committee directly to the School Board within 10 working days of the notification.

#### School Board Review

If appealed, the School Board will conduct a process to gather input and weigh opinions on the material as a whole and make a final decision on the placement of the materials. A tie vote of the School Board shall sustain the Special Committee's decision. The School Board decision shall be final.

The original questioner will be notified of the School Board decision within 5 working days of the board meeting.

Anoka-Hennepin School District No. 11

Anoka, MN 55303

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