

## **Atlanta Public Schools**

### **Media Services**

#### **Media Policy and Procedures**

##### **Mission:**

The Atlanta Public School System media program is designed to provide educational growth and personal development through a variety of media. The media center belongs to everyone and is a place where students and staff can seek knowledge for academic achievement and pleasure in a nurturing environment.

The media program provides resources, instruction and activities collaboratively planned with classroom teachers to support the curriculum. Media specialists are committed to encouraging students to look beyond the structured school situation and to become discriminating users of media in the quest for knowledge, a satisfying quality of life, responsible citizenship, and emotional maturity. It is desired that students become lifelong users of libraries. To achieve this end, students will be assisted in developing proficiency in accessing and using information appropriately.

The school system is further committed to using technology to expand new models of teaching which extend beyond the walls of the school into the community, the workplace, and the world. Media Specialists will continue to keep abreast of current trends in education to ensure that students are prepared to succeed.

## Selection

### I. Responsibility for Selection of Materials

- A. The Board of Education of the Atlanta Public School is responsible for all matters relating to the selection of materials for school library media centers.
- B. The school administrator and media specialist(s) will implement the media program. Responsibility for the selection of instructional materials is delegated through the Board of Education to each school's professionally trained and certificated staff. A media committee will be formed in the schools to make recommendations for the media program. While selection of materials involves many people—principals, teachers, students, central office personnel, and community members as well as the media specialist—responsibility for coordinating selection and recommendation for purchase of most instructional materials rests with certificated media personnel.
- C. The principal will review the selection policy and request for reconsideration procedures with the teaching staff annually. Staff will be reminded that the right to object to learning resources is granted by Board of Education Policy.

### II. Criteria for Selection of Materials

The primary purpose of the school library media collection is to support the school curriculum. To properly meet individual needs of students and teachers the media center should offer a collection of quality, quantity and broad scope in a variety of formats. Items should be considered individually according to criteria most appropriate to their subject and format.

- A. Selection criteria for materials shall reflect nationally recognized and approved professional standards.
- B. The criteria shall support the general educational goals of the Atlanta Public Schools and objectives of specific courses.
- C. Media specialists, teachers, staff and public shall be given the opportunity to examine new materials and equipment through planned exhibits.
- D. Materials selected shall support the curriculum and meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
- E. Materials chosen shall have aesthetic, social or literary value.

- F. Materials shall be appropriate to the subject area and to the ages, abilities, social, and emotional development of students whom selected.
- G. Materials selected shall be the work of competent, qualified, and accredited authors and producers.
- H. Materials shall foster respect for all groups and highlight their various contributions to society.
- I. Materials selected shall include various historical and contemporary forces that contribute to life in America today, from an impartial nonjudgmental point of view.
- J. Selection of materials shall be predicated on their strengths rather than their weaknesses.
- K. Materials on controversial issues shall be selected with care to insure a balanced representation of varying points of view.

### III. Procedures for Selection

- A. In selecting materials for purchase for the school's media center, the media specialist will evaluate the existing collection and curriculum needs. The media specialist will use professional selection aids and tools, curriculum guides, reviews, preview, professional judgment, and other appropriate sources. Attending media exhibits will provide an opportunity to examine and preview a wide variety of new materials..
- B. Recommendations for purchases will be solicited from faculty, students and community.
- C. Gift items may be accepted or rejected by the same criteria used for purchase consideration. The appropriate media committee shall evaluate the acceptability of gift materials.
- D. Selection is an ongoing process that shall be correlated with removal and discarding of worn, outdated, or obsolete materials and equipment.
- E. Selection of computer-mediated resources such as the Internet, CD-ROM data bases, on-line services, and computer software shall follow the same criteria used for print and audio-visual materials.

## **Board Policy Descriptor Code: IFAB**

### **Supplementary Materials Selection & Adoption**

#### *1. Request for Reconsideration of Instructional and Media Center Materials:*

The Atlanta Board of Education is responsible for all matters relating to the selection of instructional materials and supports the Library Bill of Rights adopted by the American Library Association.

When a request for reconsideration of instruction and media center materials is made, the principles of freedom to read, listen, and view must be defended. An objection to the learning resources used in a school's educational program may be raised through a "challenge" process. In situations where parents challenge the appropriateness of various reading, listening, or viewing materials for students, their objections must be limited to how said instructional and media center materials will impact on their children. Individuals selecting such resources must be duly qualified to make the selections, must follow the proper procedures, and must observe the criteria for selecting learning resources.

Access to challenged materials shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.

Implementation of this policy shall be in accordance with administrative regulations set forth by the Superintendent.

#### *2. American Library Association Library Bill of Rights*

The American Library Association believes that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services. It first adopted these policies as its "Library Bill of Rights" in June 1948.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

## **Procedures for Reconsideration of Instructional Media**

### **I. Statement of Policy**

Learning resources used in the system's educational program may be reconsidered on the basis of appropriateness. This procedure is for the purpose of considering the opinion of those persons in the schools and community who are not directly involved in the selection process.

### **II. Guiding Principles**

- A. The Atlanta Public School System supports the Library Bill of Rights, adopted by the American Library Association. When learning resources are challenged; principles of freedom to read, listen, view must be defended as well.
- B. Objection to Learning resources used in school's educational program may be raised despite the fact that the individuals selecting such resources were duly qualified to make the selection, followed the proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selecting learning resources.
- C. No parent has the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than his/her own children.
- D. Access to challenged materials shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
- E. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
- F. The decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

### **III. Request for Formal Consideration**

The school receiving a complaint regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue formally.

- A. The principal or his/her appointee shall listen to the objections, explain the selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the materials, and make a reasonable effort to resolve the issue. No commitment should be given as to the disposition of the challenged material. Challenged materials may not be removed without adhering to the procedure that follows.

- B. If the questioner wishes to file a formal challenge; a copy of the system's Selection of Learning Resources policy, procedure of Reconsideration of Instructional Media, and the form for Request of Reconsideration of Instructional Media shall be handed or mailed to the questioner by the principal.

#### IV. Request for Formal Consideration

- A. The Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Media form shall be signed by the questioner and submitted to the principal within ten school days of the original complaint.
- B. The principal shall meet with the local school media committee within twenty school days to consider the request and evaluate the material. The local school media committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles in the selection outlined in the system's selection of Learning Resources Policy.
- C. The Local School Committee Shall"
  - 1. Examine the challenged resource in its entirety.
  - 2. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews if the resource.
  - 3. Weigh values and faults, forming opinions based on the materials as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
  - 4. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program.
  - 5. Discuss the challenged item with the individual questioner when appropriate.
  - 6. Prepare a written report.
- D. The written report shall be discussed with the individual questioner if requested. The written report shall be retained by the school principal, with copies forwarded to administrative supervisors. A minority report may also be filed. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by Board members and appropriate officials only.
- E. If the questioner is not satisfied with the decision of the local school media committee, he/she may appeal within ten school days to the Systemwide Media Coordinator. A letter requesting the appeal and a copy of the

Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Media form completed by the questioner shall be sent to the Systemwide Media Coordinator for review by the Systemwide Media Committee.

- F. The Systemwide Media Committee shall follow the same procedure as outlined for the local media committee.
- G. If the decision of the Systemwide Media Committee is not acceptable to the questioner, an appeal may be made of the Superintendent of Schools.
- H. If the decision of the Superintendent of Schools is not acceptable to the questioner, an appeal may be made to the Board of Education.



**ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA**

Initiated by \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Representing \_\_\_\_\_  
Self \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)  
School \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT MATERIALS:**

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date \_\_\_\_\_

**AV MATERIALS:**

Kind of Media \_\_\_\_\_ Producer \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print, DVD, CD-ROM, Videocassette, Audio Cassette, broadcast, etc.)  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the following questions. If sufficient space is not provided, please use an additional sheet of paper.

1. Have you seen, heard, or read this material in its entirety? \_\_\_\_\_
2. To what do you object? Please cite specific passages, pages, frames, etc. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What do you believe is the main idea of this material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What do you feel might result from use of this material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What reviews of this material have you read? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What age group might this be suitable? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What action do you recommend that the school take on this material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. In its place, what material do you recommend that would provide adequate information on the subject? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Who brought this material to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_