

<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/selectionpolicytoolkit/criteria>

School Library Selection Criteria

School libraries vary and include libraries in public schools, charter schools, independent private schools, schools with religious affiliations, and international schools based in countries outside the United States. Criteria for selection of materials in these libraries are dependent on the goals and objectives of the educational institution of which the library is a part of; however, there are general criteria that will fit most, if not all, school libraries.

Example: School Library Selection Criteria

General Criteria:

- Support and enrich the curriculum and/or students' personal interests and learning
- Meet high standards in literary, artistic, and aesthetic quality; technical aspects; and physical format
- Be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development of the students for whom the materials are selected
- Incorporate accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources
- Earn favorable reviews in standard reviewing sources and/or favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
- Exhibit a high degree of potential user appeal and interest
- Represent differing viewpoints on controversial issues
- Provide a global perspective and promote diversity by including materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures
- Include a variety of resources in physical and virtual formats including print and non-print such as electronic and multimedia (including subscription databases and other online products, e-books, educational games, and other forms of emerging technologies)
- Demonstrate physical format, appearance, and durability suitable to their intended use

- Balance cost with need

Top Five Recommended School Library Reviewing Sources:

- Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) Notable Children's Books
- Booklist
- School Library Journal
- We Need Diverse Books website
- Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) Best Books for Young Adults

Additional Review Resources

<https://www.birdvilleschools.net/Page/68156>

What are the guiding questions and principles that the committee must consider?

The Reconsideration Committee will consider these guiding questions and principles:

Does the resource being reviewed:

- Support and is consistent with the general educational goals of the state and District and the aims and objectives of individual schools and specific courses; is it consistent with the District and campus improvement plans?
- Meet high standards for artistic quality and/or literary style, authenticity, educational significance, factual content, physical format, presentation, readability, and technical quality?
- Relevant to the subject area and for the age, ability level, learning styles, and social and emotional development of the students for whom it is selected?
- Designed to help students gain an awareness of our pluralistic society?
- Designed to provide information that will motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behavior; understand their duties, responsibilities, rights,

and privileges as citizens participating in our society; and make informed choices in their daily lives (Board Policy EF(LOCAL) - INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES)?

Also:

- Libraries have diverse materials reflecting different points of view, and a library's mission is to provide access to information to all users.
- All library users have a First Amendment right to read, view, and listen to library resources.
- Any person has the right to express concerns about library resources and expect to have the objection taken seriously.
- When library resources are reconsidered, the principles of the freedom to read, listen, and view is defended rather than specific materials.
- A questioned item will be considered in its entirety, not judged solely on portions taken out of context.
- Parents or guardians have the right to guide their children's reading, viewing, and listening but must give the same right to other parents/guardians.
- Questioned items will remain in circulation during the reconsideration process.
- The personal identification of each committee member should remain anonymous to protect the objectivity of the deliberation.
- The committee's recommendation is to objectively evaluate the material within the scope of School Board Policy and the BISD Selection Guidelines.

What is the process for the reconsideration of a resource?

The Reconsideration Committee will review the challenged material as soon as possible. All members must share copies of the book. All members must read the book in its entirety. Please note that some requests may take four-eight weeks to complete.

➡ The review committee chairs and members will take the following steps after receiving the Reconsideration Request

- secure a copy of the challenged material for each committee member, or available copies the committee members can read and pass on to the next member
- read, listen to, or view the material in its entirety
- check general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended lists/awards
- ensure the material meets the BISD Selection Guidelines
- weigh the value and faults of the material against each other and form opinions based on the material as a whole (not on passages pulled out of context)

➡ Then, the committee must meet face-to-face or by Zoom meeting. In matters requiring a vote, all members shall have an equal vote.

➡ The committee must discuss and decide on one of the following courses of action:

- retain the resource, relocate the resource to a different level, or remove the resource from all BISD library collections
- The committee's written decision (including a minority report if needed) shall be presented to the complainant, the Superintendent of Schools and Cabinet, and the school librarian(s) within five school days
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the District Reconsideration Committee, a written appeal can be made. [Contact the Birdville Office of Student Services](#) for more information.