Curriculum Development and Adoption of Instructional Materials

The curriculum of a district will be reviewed on an annual basis. The district adoption cycle will be updated annually by the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction or designee.

Request for New Course or Major Modification to Existing Course

In the context of the development and publication of the middle school and high school course catalogs, schools requesting new courses or major modifications to existing courses will submit a request (Exhibit 2020 A) to the Director of Curriculum by December first. The Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, the Executive Directors of Schools, the Director of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, the Director of Curriculum, and the appropriate Curriculum Developer will meet to approve or deny the requests. Notification of the decision of the committee will be provided to the initiator of the request prior to winter break for inclusion in the first edit of the course catalog.

Instructional Materials Committee: Scope and Schedule

The instructional materials committee is formed to establish and monitor such procedures as may be necessary for the selecting, adopting and discarding of instructional materials owned and used by the district. The committee will act upon requests for instructional material approval and removal and will evaluate and act upon citizens’ requests for reconsideration of instructional materials. The function of the committee is to ensure that selected materials conform with stated criteria.

Regular committee meetings will be held quarterly on a schedule to be set by the committee chairperson at the beginning of each school year. Special meetings may be called by the committee chairperson if necessary.

Instructional Materials Committee Membership

This committee will consist of 8 voting members. The composition will be:

1. Director of Curriculum (Chairperson of the IMC)
2. One curriculum developer or specialist jointly recommended by the District and the Association
3. One building administrator
4. Four teachers recommended by the Association representing elementary, middle and high school
5. One member from the Department of Equity
6. One librarian recommended by the Association
7. One member appointed by the Superintendent

The instructional materials committee will establish screening criteria to identify and eliminate bias based on sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal.

Term of Office

The chairperson will be a permanent member of the committee. Other members will have two-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.
Duties

Duties of the Instructional Materials Committee will be to:

1. Receive and act upon recommendations from the Curriculum Department for the adoption of basic instructional materials, approval of supplemental materials, or removal of materials from adopted lists.
2. Receive and act upon recommendations from the Curriculum Department for the approval of non-print materials.
3. Approve procedures developed by the Curriculum Department for evaluation and adoption of instructional materials.
4. Receive and review reports from subject matter committees regarding challenged materials, act on the recommendations, and forward its recommendations to the Superintendent.

Selection of Instructional Materials: Responsibilities

Goals and Principles:

1. Freedom to read and to have access to a wide variety of materials presenting differing points of view is an inherent right of students in a democratic society.
2. Materials will be chosen because they contribute to the mastery of course objectives, the enrichment of the curriculum and the students’ independent search for knowledge.
3. Materials selected will be suitable to the reading level, intellectual and social maturity, and interests of the intended student users.
4. Materials should contribute to the students’ growing understanding of their culture and other cultures, the concerns and contributions - current and historical - that represent the diversity of the human population.
5. The variety of materials selected will provide a wide range of perspectives and present the concerns and contributions - current and historical - that represent the diversity of the human population.
6. Teachers’ knowledge of a given subject area and students’ needs and abilities will guide the evaluation, selection, and adoption of all types of materials.

Initial Selection:

1. **Instructional materials** initially will be selected by such certificated staff as the superintendent may designate. Instructional materials are major instructional materials for a given course.

2. **Supplementary materials** will be selected by certificated staff using such materials with the understanding that while such materials do not require item-by-item approval of the committee, they must be selected using the above goals and principles and are subject to normal reconsideration procedures. Supplementary materials support the major instructional material of a course and should be available in sufficient amounts to support the curriculum.

   (Trial-use texts of an experimental, pilot nature may be authorized for use by the superintendent prior to board approval for general use throughout the district.)

Recommendation:

**Instructional material** will be approved by the committee. Supplementary materials will not require committee approval.
Approval

1. **Instructional materials** will be approved by the board prior to their use in classrooms. Instructional materials selected previously are exempt from this requirement.

2. **Supplementary materials** will not require board approval.

   The committee chairperson will provide, principals and curriculum developers with copies of the committee meeting schedule at the beginning of each school year.

Tasks and Time Lines

Textbooks can be approved at any committee meeting and sent for adoption to the next board meeting. The superintendent directs that all non-emergency requests be confined to two board meetings per year. The committee chairperson will forward requests for instructional materials adoption to the board only twice per year as noted in the committee meeting schedule. Requests to deviate from this timeline should be forwarded to the committee chairperson.

The following checklist is provided to help text selectors follow the above criteria. Selections which receive “fair” or “poor” ratings on any items should be avoided. If materials uniquely suited to an important purpose fail to meet the above criteria, they may be used in conjunction with countervailing materials.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bias Content</th>
<th>Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor/Not-Applicable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Presents more than one viewpoint of controversial issues.</td>
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<td>2. Realistically presents culturally and racially diverse people.</td>
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<td>3. Includes contributions of culturally and racially diverse authors.</td>
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<td>4. Presents non-stereotypic models.</td>
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<td>5. Facilitates the sharing of cultural differences.</td>
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<td>6. Promotes the positive nature of differences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Includes the contributions, inventions, or discoveries of culturally and racially diverse people.</td>
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<td>8. Includes the contributions, inventions, or discoveries of all genders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Presents culturally and racially diverse people in a manner that promotes ethnic pride.</td>
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<td>10. Facilitates an environment open to discovery and experimentation.</td>
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To evaluate materials by these criteria, instructional material selectors may find the following steps helpful:

A. Read reviews in professional periodicals through the curriculum office, state superintendent of public instruction, etc.
B. Review copies of other available texts. The district curriculum office will order samples on request.
C. Check the reading level of the text through use of a standard readability formula.
D. Use tentatively selected materials according to pilot-use procedures.

**Challenges to Instructional Materials**

The following procedures are established for consideration of objections by parents or other District residents to print or non-print materials in use within the Bellevue School District.

A. The process begins with an informed conversation between the complainant and the teacher or librarian. The staff member explains the use of the instructional material including the relationship to the selection criteria identified in the Instructional Materials policy. Staff is encouraged to keep an informal record of the discussion. If the objection cannot be resolved through a discussion between the staff member and complainant the principal will:
   1. Schedule a conference with the complainant and the staff member(s) using the material. The principal discusses the issues with the parties involved and works toward a resolution at the building level. Agreement may be reached at that time to continue to use the material within that building. An informal complaint will not require the removal of any instructional material.

B. If the complainant is not satisfied with the building level decision, the principal will give the complainant a “Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials” (Exhibit 2020 B) to complete and send to the Director of Curriculum. No Requests for Reconsideration will be processed unless the above steps have been completed by one complainant for the material in question. A Request for Reconsideration must be filed with the Director of Curriculum. The Director of Curriculum will then complete the following:
   1. Inform the Superintendent’s office of the complaint
   2. Initiate committee review
   3. Inform the patron of the handling of the request; and

Materials will remain in use until a determination has been made by the Superintendent.

C. The Director of Curriculum will appoint a subject matter committee of the Instructional Materials Committee to review the Request for Reconsideration. The subject matter committee will prepare a recommendation as to the future use of the challenged material.

D. The patron making the complaint and staff members currently using the material in question will be given the opportunity to appear before the subject matter committee to present information. Hearings of a community member’s request for reconsideration will be open to the public. The review and recommendation should be completed with all due speed, considering the time needed to make a careful study of the material in question.

E. The Instructional Materials Committee will review the report of the subject matter committee and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.

F. The decision concerning future use of materials will be made by the Superintendent following receipt of committee recommendation(s). The Superintendent will inform the involved parties in writing of the decision.
G. The complainant or any staff member affected may appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the Board of Directors. Such appeal will be in writing and will be reviewed by the Board at its next regular meeting. The Board’s decision will be final.

**Conditions for Loan and Sale of Instructional Materials**

Free textbooks and other instructional materials may be made available for loan to students when, in the judgment of the board members, the best interests of the district will be served by such a decision. The professional staff will maintain records necessary for the proper accounting of all instructional materials and schools will set forth conditions for student replacement of lost or badly damaged materials.

**Removal of Instructional Materials**

Instructional materials may be removed from collections at any time that they no longer meet the criteria for initial selection outlined in “Criteria for Selection of Instructional Material.” Any instructional materials may be removed when the administration judges such removal to be in the best interests of the district. Ordinary procedures for withdrawal of materials are outlined below:

A. **Instructional materials** will be removed from collections by the committee based on the criteria for selection in this procedure and on the availability of suitable replacement materials.

B. **Supplementary materials** will be removed from collections by individual certificated staff holding such collections based on the criteria for selection in this procedure and on the availability of suitable replacement materials.

Members of the community are invited to review any instructional materials in current use or proposed for district purchase. Such review may be accomplished at the school or by contacting the Director of Curriculum.

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