

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Example: The Board of Trustees of the Anytown School District have authorized the use of this form and delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library materials to the school library media specialist. This is the first step in the reconsideration process. Please return this form to the Principal of the High School (or whatever school is involved), 11 Main Street, Anytown, Illinois.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Do you represent yourself? _____

Or an organization? _____

Name of Organization _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

____ Book _____ Video _____ Newspaper

____ Display _____ Magazine _____ Audio

____ Electronic Information/Network (Please specify.) _____

Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
3. Have you examined the entire resource?
4. What concerns you about the resource?
5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. 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.
- II. 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.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which 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.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.



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How to Write a School Library Selection Policy

INTRODUCTION

This is only a guide to help a school librarian develop a selection policy.

The information for this pamphlet was taken from the Workbook for Selection Policy Writing as shown on the American Library Association website as accessed on July 25, 2006.

For more examples and instructions, visit:
www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=dealing&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=11173

The following examples show sections that should be included in each school selection policy.

Although many of the goals may be the same, the selection policy for the library media center is separate from that for the selection of instructional materials for the school district.

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceable assembly and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

*First Amendment to the
United States Constitution*

OBJECTIVES

Example: The main objective of the Anytown School Media Center is to choose materials that appeal to all ages, interest levels, and levels of difficulty and allow for a variety of points of view while enriching and supporting the curriculum and encouraging a love of reading.

You may want to add more detail or objectives for each school or grade level.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Example: Material selection is the responsibility of the school librarian with input from the teachers, students, and administration.

CRITERIA

Include criteria relevant to your objectives.

Examples: quality of illustrations, authority, appropriateness for age level, ability to stimulate thinking and discussion, helping in social development, clarity of sound, format, educational significance, user appeal, quality of binding, timeliness, etc.

Examples of sources consulted but not limited to: *School Library Journal*, Children’s Catalog, Horn Book, Booklist, AASA Science Books and Films, Bulletins of the Center for Children’s Books, etc.

PROCEDURES

Describe the steps involved in selection from coordinating recommendations from various departments and age level teachers and staff, and reviews to the types of materials you collect, where you get them, and why you choose them. Include how you handle gifts (usually evaluated the same as items you purchase), when and how you weed the collection, how you handle ephemera, what you do not buy, and, if you charge fines, how you handle them.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

Include a statement on intellectual freedom and its importance; consider including the texts of the first amendment and Library Bill of Rights.

RECONSIDERATION

Even when your policies and procedures are followed, there may still be objections or challenges to items in the collection. What is the framework for registering complaints within the context of the principles of intellectual freedom? What are the steps? Generally, the person who complains is referred to the principal who attempts to defuse the situation. If the complainant is still not satisfied, they are sent a copy of the selection policy, complaint procedure, and request for reconsideration form. When a written complaint is received, the principal chooses a reconsideration committee, which should include the librarian, and the committee reports their recommendation to the school board.