MODEL POLICY #22

LIBRARY MATERIAL TRANSPARENCY

Why Adopt This Policy?

School boards should consider adopting a policy on library material transparency to ensure that District personnel review of library materials aligns with student educational needs and community values while maintaining age-appropriate content. This policy promotes transparency in managing library resources, setting an expectation for openness and accountability in providing access to school library materials for students and the school community. By establishing clear procedures for maintaining and updating a publicly posted library materials list, the district can effectively monitor and enhance the quality and relevance of resources available to students.

Policy

This policy is established to ensure that the review of library materials in the district is conducted in a manner that promotes the educational needs and values of the community and considers age-appropriateness. It seeks to ensure transparency in the management of library materials in the district and aims to promote openness and accountability in providing access to educational resources for students and the school community.

Library material means any print or nonprint material that is purchased with public funds and is catalogued and processed as part of a library, including books, e-books, material available in a digital library database, streaming videos, sound recordings, periodicals, newspapers, applications, and subscription content in any form. This includes materials in classroom libraries that are purchased with public funds.

At least once per year, district personnel shall establish or maintain a list of the library materials in each school library in the school district. At least once per year, at the beginning of the school year, district personnel shall publish a list of the library materials in each school library in the district on the district website. The library materials list shall be published as either a searchable online database or a sortable spreadsheet that includes material title, author, publisher, and the school(s) where the material is located.

The District Administrator, in collaboration with school librarians and relevant administrators and district personnel, will be responsible for implementing this policy and shall have 120 days from the effective date of this policy to publish a list of library materials.

The District Administrator shall establish a process to ensure school librarians or relevant administrators and district personnel will post on the district websites, once per semester, an updated list that reflects additions and changes to available library materials.

Legal Analysis — National

This policy enhances parents' rights to have access to what library materials their children will have access to in school. The Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution recognizes the "inherent right" of parents to "direct the upbringing and education of children under their control." *See Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510, 534–35 (1925). Additionally, school boards have a substantial, legitimate role to play in the determination of library content. *Board of Education Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico* 457 U.S. 853, 869, 102 S. Ct. 2799, 2809, 73 L. Ed. 2d 435 (1982).

Legal Analysis — Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, school districts are required to designate a library media person to direct and coordinate the library media program for the district. *See* Wis. Admin PI § 8.01(2)(h). This policy operates supplementary to other library media services regulations and does not replace them.

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