

TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Board of Education is responsible for the selection and designation of all textbooks to be used in the District schools. A textbook is defined as “any book, or a book substitute, which shall include hard covered or paperback books, workbooks, or manuals” and “any courseware or other content-based instructional materials in an electronic format, as such terms are defined in the regulations of the commissioner, which a pupil is required to use as a text, or a text-substitute, in a particular class or program in the school he or she legally attends.” The Superintendent of Schools, in cooperation with the Director of Elementary Education and Director of Secondary Education shall recommend textbooks to be used in the schools for the Board's consideration.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the selection and recommendation of textbooks and a method for selecting staff members who shall serve in the selection and recommendation process.

The following criteria are to be considered in the selection of textbooks:

1. textbook or material should have been copyrighted within the past five years;
2. qualifications of the author(s) on the subject;
3. adaptability to existing instructional program;
4. accuracy of the information presented;
5. sufficient scope to meet the requirements of the curriculum as developed locally and approved by the State Education Department;
6. objectivity and impartiality in treatment of subject matter and freedom from bias and prejudice;
7. high quality format in respect to typography, arrangement of materials or pages, cover design, size and margins;
8. appropriateness to grade level as to vocabulary, sentence structure, and organization;
9. textbook series should meet grade-to-grade requirements. They should contain supplementary aids to learning, when desirable and necessary, such as a table of contents, introduction, study activities, exercises, questions, problems, selected references, bibliography, index glossary and appendices;
10. texts should include appropriate illustrative materials--pictures, maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, etc., which clarify the text and enrich the content;

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11. materials should fairly represent the many ethnic and cultural groups and their contribution to American heritage pursuant to policy 4350; and
12. a reasonable balance of viewpoints regarding controversial issues should be presented.

After the District designates a textbook for use within the District, that textbook shall not be superseded by any other textbook within a period of five (5) years from the time the textbook is designated, except upon a three-fourths vote by the Board of Education.

The following criteria are to be considered in the selection of literary works for classroom use in teaching literature, as well as the assignment of such works to particular grade levels:

1. use of a compositional style which contributes to the reader's critical and appreciative understanding of the work;
2. sophisticated use of literary devices (i.e., metaphor, point of view, tone) to further student understanding of written concepts;
3. levels of student maturity and experience necessary for empathic reading of literature;
4. capacity of a work to capture student interest;
5. thematic treatment which promotes sound and healthy values for students;
6. intrinsic qualities that establish a work as a significant part of the literary heritage; and
7. variety to avoid duplication of theme, plot, setting, etc., unless such duplication affords opportunities for comparison and contrast or serves to reinforce understanding.

Cross-ref: 1420, Complaints about Curricula or Instructional Materials

Ref: Education Law §§701 et seq.; 1711; 2508; 2566

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