

## **LIBRARY AND MEDIA RESOURCES** **SELECTION AND USE POLICY**

The Board of Education (“Board”) of the Virtual Preparatory Academy of Oklahoma (the “School” or “District”) adopts this Library and Media Resources Selection and Use Policy pursuant to applicable Oklahoma law and administrative rules.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to establish selection criteria for the acquisition of appropriate library and media resources for students. In furtherance of the purpose of this policy, an important mission of the School is to provide quality learning experiences every day for every student without exception. The School supports the creation of learning environments that encourage intellectual and social development leading to productive citizenship by selecting appropriate library and media resources. In furtherance of this policy, the School also establishes selection criteria for library and media resources in addition to guidelines for use.

Gift materials may be accepted with the understanding that these materials must meet the same selection criteria as materials purchased with school funds and must be consistent with any applicable Board policy. All gifts become part of the general collection and thus property of the School.

Citizens questioning the appropriateness of instructional resource materials will be directed to contact the Head of School.

### **LIBRARY MEDIA AND VIDEO RESOURCES**

Authority for library media and video resources (“library”) is delegated by the Board to the Head of School. The Head of School may designate another staff member to serve in said position(s). Library selection committees, working under the leadership of the Head of School, are formed each year to review materials and make recommendations for purchases for the School’s library. The Board does not intend its library to constitute “open forums” or “limited forums.”

The Board has determined that the selection process for library media and video resources will be based on the following objectives:

- To provide materials which support the curriculum and learning
- To provide equitable access to a variety of information materials, taking into consideration individual needs, interests, abilities, diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, variance in language, and maturity levels of the students served
- To provide materials which reflect all sides of issues, beliefs, and ideas for the purpose of guiding students in becoming critical thinkers who can understand varying perspectives
- To develop a collection of popular print/non-print materials of high interest that attracts students to reading for recreation and personal interest as well as learning.

## **LIBRARY AND MEDIA RESOURCES POLICY (continued)**

Selection emphasis is placed on providing a wide range of fiction and nonfiction materials that promote a life-long love of reading, support the School's curriculum, and contribute to the professional goals of the School and its faculty. Materials are selected to reflect cultures, beliefs, and viewpoints of our diverse community. The School supports the principles outlined in the American Association of School Librarians interpretation of the Library Bill Of Rights. The Board hereby directs that the following criteria are considered in the selection process:

- Relevance to the local curriculum, state, and national standards
- Literary merit including quality of writing and/or illustrations
- Authority and accuracy of content
- Social significance and representation of diversity
- Timeliness
- Reading level
- Popular appeal
- Format
- Reputation and standards of the publisher or producer
- Representation of differing viewpoints
- Cost

The Head of School, in consultation with the Library Selection Committee, will select and order materials based on a number of factors including curriculum needs, staff requests, and state of the current library collection. These factors further include:

- Special consideration will be given to award winning titles.
- Materials sometimes considered controversial will be included after careful consideration following standard selection criteria, such as:

Religion: Factual unbiased materials representing all major religions may be included. Bibles and other sacred writings are acceptable. Publications from religious bodies may be selected if they have general value or appear in standard indexes.

Ideologies: Factual information about ideologies or philosophies of current or continuing interest may be included.

Science: Medical and scientific knowledge suitable to the developmental stage of the students should be made available.

Fantasy: Both modern fantastic fiction and traditional fantasy and folklore are part of our culture's rich storytelling tradition and will be evaluated and may be included in collections using the same criteria as other forms.

- Textbooks will not be included in the general collection.
- Professional materials may be housed within the library's professional collection.
- Lost materials will be replaced under the discretion of the Head of School.

## **LIBRARY AND MEDIA RESOURCES POLICY (continued)**

Selection Tools. The following tools may be used in the selection of library materials:

- Standard review sources such as Booklist, Horn Book, School Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, The Digest of Software Reviews: Education, and AFVA Evaluations.
- Suggestions from patrons including staff and students
- Professional and trade journals
- Lists of recommended titles
- Publishers' preview copies, catalogs, and promotional materials

Review Procedures. The School will periodically, but no less often than every three years, review the educational suitability and age-appropriate nature of any material available to students in its library. This periodic review will be conducted by the School whether there has been a complaint or question concerning the contents of the library. A review may also be triggered by a parent / guardian, a student, a School official, or any other School stakeholder. The review will utilize the objectives, criteria, and factors set forth in this policy in examining the appropriateness of the library materials available to students. The School may remove certain library materials or restrict access to certain library materials based upon such a review.

### Deaccessioning

In compliance with American Library Association guidelines, the collection of the library will be continually reevaluated in relation to evolving curriculum, new formats of materials, new instruction methods, and the current needs of its students. Materials no longer appropriate will be removed. Lost and worn materials of lasting value should be replaced. Deaccessioning or weeding is essential to maintaining a relevant library collection. Materials considered for weeding should include items: (1) in poor physical condition; (2) containing obsolete subject matter; (3) no longer needed to support the curriculum or student/faculty interests; (4) superseded by more current information; (5) containing inaccurate information; (6) with low circulation; and (7) offering stereotypical images and characterizations.

Note: Special consideration should be given to retaining materials of local interest including those relating to Oklahoma history.

### CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AND MATERIALS

The purpose of this aspect of the Board's policy is to establish procedures for discussing controversial issues and using controversial materials. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to select issues and materials for classroom presentation/discussion that are consistent with textbooks or standards and benchmarks in line with the approved curriculum. Where controversial issues may arise, the teacher must give due consideration to the significance and appropriateness of the issue, the students' knowledge and interest, and the adequacy and availability of related materials.

## **LIBRARY AND MEDIA RESOURCES POLICY (continued)**

### **EVALUATION**

A committee comprised of 6 adult members to be selected annually during the first month of school by the Head of School will be formed to serve as a review team for challenged controversial materials being used by the School. (Input from students may be considered at the discretion of and in the format determined by the Head of School.) The following steps have been established to set out the procedures to assist the team in evaluating these materials.

The appropriate steps for the evaluation of challenged materials are as follows:

- A copy of the form, *Citizen's Request for Re-evaluation of Materials*, will be given to a complainant by the principal/teacher.
- The form must be completed by the complainant and returned to the principal, who will forward the form immediately upon receipt to the Head of School.
- The Head of School or designee will chair the committee and will send information to each committee member about the material to be reviewed within five working days of receiving the complaint or as soon as otherwise practicable.
- The committee will be asked to evaluate the materials as to whether they are consistent with the Mission Statement of the School, this policy, and community standards, as well as appropriate to the relevant student's maturity, intellect, and emotional capacities.
- A minimum of four members of the committee will read, examine, and evaluate the material as it relates to the questions on the Citizen's Request form within 10 working days of a member's receipt of the materials or as soon as otherwise practicable.
- The committee will, within ten working days thereafter, make a final recommendation on the Citizen's Request for Re-evaluation of Materials. The recommendation will be sent to the Head of School, principal, and the complainant. The Head of School will thereafter forward the decision to the Board Chair within three working days or otherwise practicable.
- Appeals of the committee's recommendation by the complainant must be directed in writing to the Chair of the Board within five working days after receipt of the committee's recommendation.
- If an appeal is submitted to the Board Chair, a Board of Education meeting shall be called in which the Board shall review the matter in detail and obtain such additional information that is deemed necessary. At said meeting, the complainant may present any additional information considered pertinent in response to the recommendation of the committee. The committee may also appoint one or more representatives to speak on its behalf to the Board. The Board shall issue a final written non-appealable decision within 15 workdays after the Board meeting for which the appeal was heard. A copy of the decision of the Board shall be sent to all persons previously identified.

Any person retains the right to file a complaint pursuant to Oklahoma Statute Title 70, §24-157 and Oklahoma Administrative Code 210: 10-1-23(g). Please note the process described above is not applicable to complaints regarding Oklahoma Statute Title 70 §24-157 or Oklahoma Administrative Code 210:10-1-23. Any individual who has witnessed or experienced the violation of Oklahoma Statute Title 70, §24-157 or Oklahoma Administrative Code 210:10-1-23 and wishes to file a complaint with the School must do so by contacting the Head of School.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Reference: OAC 210:35-3-126