

Selection of Materials

Lake Forest Elementary School Media Center

Mission Statement:

The Lake Forest Elementary School Media Center provides a structured environment for students throughout their instructional day as well as before and after school. We are determined to improve upon every student's moral emotional development so they can meet the social demands placed on each citizen in the community. The Administration, faculty, and staff are committed to giving students personal attention required to develop their social, academic, creative, and vocational skills. These skills will not only benefit the students time in the classroom but to also foster a lifelong enjoyment of reading and interacting with their outside surroundings.

Programs, Philosophies and Goals:

Education is the right of all students. Each student regardless of ability should have special opportunities to develop his/her potential so that he/she is able to function productively in a democratic society.

The school accepts the major responsibility for all areas of education for the students it serves. The primary emphasis is placed on academic pursuits complimented by programs to develop good physical and mental health, and appreciation of aesthetic values, and sense of creativity.

It is our goal to provide free, full and appropriate educational opportunities for all students, regardless of behavioral and/or disciplinary problems. The Horizon Alternative Center staff had redefined the educational priorities within the perspective of the needs of each individual student. These needs reveal a central commitment of overriding importance; the development of sound interpersonal relationships, and appropriate social interactions in the context of intellectual, and physical learning experiences.

Selection Objectives:

The Lake Forest Media Center selection objective is:

1. Take into consideration the age of the children who will have the most access to the material provided by the Media Center.
2. Make the appropriate selection of material for that age group.
3. Select books and materials that will be of high interest to the student, and have high educational merit (accuracy, quality, authoritativeness).
4. To keep the library current in all aspects of new media.

5. To ensure all selections are free of stereotyping and include different points of view.

The media specialist is responsible for the evaluation and selection of materials in the Media Center. Criteria used to select book and AV equipment are as follows:

The media specialist handbook states:

Evaluation is judging the intrinsic merits of materials and selection in determining whether the materials meet the needs of the intended user.

Chapter 233.43 of the Florida Statutes states the “such policies shall also provide for an evaluation of an instructional materials to be requisitioned that have not been previously in the schools of the district.”

Chapter 233.15 states:

In the selection of textbooks, library books, and other reading material used in public school system, the standards used to determine the propriety of the material shall include;

- The age of the children who normally could be expected to have access to the material
- The educational purpose to be served by the material
- The degree to which the material would be supplemented and explained by the mature classroom instruction as part of the normal classroom instructional program.

Resources to be used in selecting materials:

- Book list
- Library Media Connection
- School Library Journal
- Florida Media Quarterly
- Teacher Surveys
- Students Surveys
- School Library Catalog
- Various online resources (Titlewave, Mackin, etc.)
- SSYRA Winners

Lake Forest Media Center refers to the “Library Bill of Rights” set forth by the ALA in matters of intellectual freedom. Those rights are as follows:

- 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.

How Donated Materials Will Be Handled

Donated materials are welcome in the media center at any time. However, the media specialist has the right to not include materials in the collection if the materials do not meet all selection objectives. Every donation is treated in the same way as purchased materials would be evaluated before inclusion into the media center collection.

Horizon Media Center will weed material using the guidelines set forth by the Media Specialist handbook which are as follows:

1. Last date of circulation – If the material has not been in general use during the past three to five years (depending on the type of material).
2. Physical condition – If the condition is badly worn or excessively dirty, the item may be weeded, and a decision concerning replacement should be made.
3. Timeliness – This is one of the most frequent criteria: Reference may be: (a) out-of-date materials, particularly in the sciences and technology. A rule of thumb is to reconsider almost anything more than three to five years, (b) materials no longer in demand, or that no longer support the curriculum or current community needs (c) older editions no longer used, and (d) dated textbooks, where they are part of the collection.
4. Reliability/Accuracy – Viewpoints change and must be reflected in the collection.
5. Ephemera – certain subject areas, from inspirational tones to how to make a million dollars, go out fashion and use. This type of fad literature should be weeded, particularly when it is found that a title no longer circulates, is no longer timely, or formation seems unreliable.
6. Duplicates – Where there are duplicates and none seem to be circulating or used, a single copy may be all that is needed. At a later date (one to two years) the single copy should be reconsidered for weeding.
7. Reference- These works should be given special attention in order that all the above criteria be applicable in all of the special areas. Current information in this area is critical.

Handling Censorship Challenges

Taken from the Media Services Handbook which can be found at (http://www.sbac.edu/pages/ACPS/Departments_Programs/Departments__M-R/Media_Services/Media_Specialists_Info_/Media_Specialist_s_Handbook/Selection_and_Re-Evaluation_of/Re-Evaluating_Challenged_Mater)

In all cases, where materials being used in a school are challenged, they should be challenged at the level where the materials are being used, and referred to the Superintendent and Board only if the citizen is not satisfied with the handling at the local level.

When a citizen wishes to question materials or text content, he/she should fill out the Citizens Request Form. (Form adapted from the Davies-Brockell Media Selection Policy and the National Council of Teachers of English).

This form must be filled out and turned in to the principal of the school where the materials are being challenged.

The principal and a committee will review the materials using the appropriate form as applicable.

Any person reviewing challenged materials should be familiar with:

- The district's selection policy
- The individual school's selection policy
- Library Bill of Rights
- Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Statement on Labeling: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Evaluating Library Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to Read Statement, by the ALA Council

For the principal's guidance, the following is the recommended procedure:

1. The school personnel involved will be courteous to the complainant, but make no commitment; he will advise the complainant to make an appointment with the principal, and notify the principal of the complaint.
2. It is the complainant's responsibility to make an appointment with the principal.
3. At this conference, the principal invites the complainant to make his objections in writing, using the "Citizen's Request for Re-Evaluation of Materials" form.
4. If the complainant does not complete and return the form, the matter will be given no further consideration.

5. Upon receipt of the completed form, the principal will appoint a committee to re-evaluate the materials and report back within 15 working days; will notify (1) Superintendent and (2) the Director of Learning Resources.

6. The committee takes the following steps:

- a. Reads the entire book, views or listens to the entire material.
- b. Checks general acceptance by checking reviews, recommended lists.
- c. Determines the extent to which the material supports the curriculum.
- d. Completes the appropriate checklist evaluating the materials as a whole, and not in its parts.

7. Upon receipt of the checklist, the principal makes a decision as to the action to be taken and notifies (1) the Superintendent, (2) the Director of Learning Resources, and (3) the complainant. If there is need for further review, the principal refers complainant to the Superintendent or his designated representative and forwards all pertinent documents.

8. The Superintendent may accept the recommendation of the school committee, or if further action is desired, appoint a district level Media Review Committee* which is representative of the entire district.

9. This district committee will follow the same procedure as for school committees. At the completion of their evaluations, they will report back to the Superintendent who will present the report to the School Board and make recommendations for action.

10. The final decision will be made by the School Board.

*People to be considered for Review Committees (school or district):

- School media specialists (generally the media specialist chairs this committee) Experts in the field up for review (i.e., doctors, policemen, university professors)
- Teachers of the subject area
- Parents or lay citizens with knowledge or interest in the subject
- Students at the appropriate age level