

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Plainfield Board of Education will provide a wide range of learning resources at varying levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and cultural influence and the presentation of different points of view, in order to meet the needs of students and teachers. The Board of Education shall provide educational materials and equipment that support and enrich the curriculum and further the achievement of the school system's instructional goals.

The term “learning resources” refers to any material (whether acquired or produced locally) with instructional content or function that is used for teaching and learning purposes whether formal or informal in nature. The primary objective of learning resources is to implement, support, and enrich the district’s educational program.

General Principles of Selection:

The Board will provide materials requested by the professional staff which will:

1. Enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, and aesthetic values and will promote reading for enjoyment.
3. Present more than one point of view but not necessarily all sides of issues (e.g. political, economic, religious, social, minority, and gender) so that students may have an opportunity to develop the practice of critical analysis and make informed judgments in their daily lives.
4. Explain or describe the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to national heritage and the world economy.

Criteria:

The Board delegates the responsibility for the selection of learning resources to the professional staff employed by the district under the direction of the building principals in concert with the curriculum director and the teaching and learning council. The criteria used for the selection of learning resources include the following:

1. To support and be consistent with the general educational goals of Plainfield and those of the state of Connecticut.
2. To enrich and support the curriculum and the instructional needs of students and staff both in the classroom and in their daily academic encounters.
3. To meet high standards of quality in presentation, format, content, educational significance, readability, interest, authenticity, and artistic value and/or literary style.
4. To be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.

5. To examine film ratings and obtain parental permission when the material contains objectionable or controversial content.
6. To provide a background of information that will motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behavior.
7. To encourage students to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as participating citizens in our society; and make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
8. To demonstrate opposing sides of issues so that students may develop the skills of critical analysis and decision making.

Textbooks shall be defined as the primary or basic reading for students in a particular subject and student section in a semester or during the entire school year; supplemental and reference books shall not be considered to be textbooks.

The administration will develop rules for textbook selection which meet the above criteria, including:

1. analysis, evaluation, and recommendation by professional staff.
2. consistency between buildings and grade levels.
3. the opportunity for interested citizens in the district to review recommended textbooks.

The Board of Education will make final textbook selections.

Selection of materials is an ongoing process that includes the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value. The department head/faculty coordinator and the building principal must be consulted before discarding materials.

Complaints:

Any district resident will have the right to file a complaint regarding supplementary instructional material to which he or she objects. The complaint must be filed in writing. The procedure for processing such complaints will be as follows:

The complaint will be filed with the principal to review and render a decision within 15 calendar days. The principal will have the authority to withdraw, temporarily, supplementary material from use when, in his or her judgment, such action is in the best interest of the school district.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the principal's decision, he or she may request that the superintendent review the complaint. The superintendent or his designee will also have the authority to withdraw supplementary material from use when, in his or her judgment, such action is in the best interest of the school district. If the principal temporarily withdraws supplementary material from use, the action will automatically be sent to the superintendent for review. The superintendent will render a decision within 15 calendar days after the date of removal.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the superintendent's decision, he or she may request a review of the complaint by the Board's Curriculum Committee. The Committee will meet within 31 calendar days after the date of receipt of the request. The committee will review the complaint and make a recommendation to the full Board within 31 calendar days. During the course of a review, the complainant will have the opportunity to appear in support of the complaint; the faculty coordinator or chairman of the department(s) and teachers in whose class the material is used will have the opportunity to present the rationale for inclusion. The committee may solicit and/or accept information, evidence, or testimony from other persons as the committee deems advisable.

The Board will review and act on the recommendation of the Committee within 31 calendar days after the recommendation of the Committee is received.

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