

## School Library Selection Policy

### I. Philosophy

At OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY School educational theory conceives the school to be a center of inquiry where students continually engage in the search for new knowledge. In this context, knowledge is perceived to be tentative, often arbitrary, and always constructed by the learner. That knowledge is tentative implies that the search for new understandings is continuous and that the generation of new ideas is always possible. That arbitrary nature of knowledge requires the learner to organize inchoate stimuli in a coherent way. The assumption that knowledge is constructed amplifies the importance of the nexus between a learner's prior knowledge and the exposure to new information. The mission of the OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY School Library is to provide the instruction, materials, and resources that will support the students in their continuing quest.

### II. Goals

The selection of library materials is guided by the principles that originated with the American Association of School Librarians and were modified to properly meet the needs of OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY School.

- Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials.
- Identify materials that will add to the students' fund of factual knowledge.
- Select materials that stimulate growth in literary appreciation, aesthetic standards, and ethical judgment.
- Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that students are required to weigh alternatives and think critically.
- Provide selections that represent the full range of religious, ethnic, cultural groups that make up our society.
- Identify materials that support and enrich the ever changing curricula of the school.
- Select materials that are suited to the wide range of interests produced by the abilities and maturity levels of the students served.

### III. Selection Responsibility

The responsibility of selecting and purchasing library materials is delegated to the school librarian. The librarian will be aided by the school principal, library aide, and teachers.

### IV. Procedures for Selection

Recommendations are solicited by the librarian from the teachers, staff, and students. Professionally recognized selection sources are consulted. These may include those listed in **Appendix A**. Evaluation and selection is based on the criteria for selection and the curricular and personal needs of the school community.

### V. Selection Criteria

The ability of the library to meet the needs of school community depends to a great extent on the quantity, scope, and quality of the materials available in the collection. The most important consideration for any item is whether it contributes to the fulfillment of the curriculum and meets the individual needs of the students and teachers.

It is the obligation of the library to provide a diversity of points of view so that users may develop the

practice of critical analysis.

Each item is considered individually. Materials are selected for their strengths, based on criteria that are most applicable to that particular work.

Criteria for evaluation of nonfiction works:

- Authoritativeness/reputation of the author and/or publisher
- Timeliness, permanence, and relevance of the item to the curriculum.
- Accurate content
- Logical organization and presentation of information
- Impartiality/nonjudgmental point of view/freedom from bias or presentation of various points of view depending on need
- Readability and popular appeal
- Avoidance of stereotyped images of any group or individual
- Suitability for the physical and emotional development and the varied learning styles of the students
- Value commensurate with cost and/or need
- Physical durability

Additional criteria for the evaluation of fiction works:

- Readability and effectiveness in sustaining the reader's interest
- Believable, logical, and well constructed plot
- Convincing and multidimensional characterization
- Effective use of language and dialog
- Originality, literary merit, and aesthetic value
- Presentation of human emotions, values, and ideas

## VI. Reevaluation of the collection

The selection process begins with the evaluation of materials for purchase. It ends with the evaluation of materials to be discarded. Materials which are out-of-date or inaccurate do not support the goals of the library or the school. Weeding such materials is an essential and ongoing part of the collection development process carried out by the librarian.

Criteria for weeding undesirable materials:

- Currency: Subject matter is out of date, factually inaccurate, or no longer relevant to the educational program or no longer meets the criteria established for selection.
- Dispensability: Duplicate copy or copies no longer needed in the collection.
- Physical condition: Worn, torn, soiled; pages or parts missing; unable to be repaired.
- Record of use: Item not circulated in five years.

## VII. Gifts

Parents, organizations, and friends of the school may wish to contribute funds, gifts, or memorials to the library. OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY School welcomes such involvement; however, the gifts and memorials must meet the established selection criteria.

## VIII. Intellectual Freedom

The OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY School Library supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the Constitution of the United States and expressed in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association (See **Appendix B**).

## IX. Procedures for Handling Challenged Materials

The school recognizes the rights of individuals to challenge materials included in the library collection. In the interest of handling all complaints fairly the following procedures will be followed:

1. The librarian and the principal will work together to resolve informally difficulties concerning library materials.
2. If all parties cannot reach an agreement, the complainant will submit a completed Request for Reconsideration form to the librarian. Access to the challenged material will not be restricted during the process of reconsideration. (**See form below.**)
3. The material in question will be reevaluated by a committee of school personnel chosen by the librarian.
4. The committee will make one of the following recommendations to the director:
  - The material is compatible with the philosophy and criteria of this policy and should be not restricted or removed.
  - The material is not compatible with the philosophy and criteria of this policy and should be restricted or removed.
  - The material should be limited to conditions specified by the committee.
5. The complainant will be notified in writing of the committee's decision.

## X. Policy Review

The Selection of Materials Policy will be subject to automatic review every three years and at other times as required.

### AUTHORIZATION:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

[Request For Reconsideration of Library Materials Form](#) (from the Shelby Co. Schools Library Procedure Manual)

[Appendix A: Selection Sources](#)

[Appendix B: Library Bill of Rights](#)