

IFBC-R Media Programs

5/5/17

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

Each school in the Cobb County School District (District) shall have a library media center adequately staffed and containing the quality, quantity and variety of print and non-print materials and equipment to support the school's curricular offerings and to challenge individual students at their developmental level.

The District provides instructional media materials through the classrooms and library media centers of the local schools in order to accommodate the varied learning needs of students. Implementation of the library media program and allocation of funds for this purpose shall be such as to ensure compliance with State Standards and accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (AdvancEd).

The District respects the right of an individual to make independent decisions about reading materials. Further, the District acknowledges the right of parents/guardians and other citizens to be involved in the library media programs of the schools and the use of supplementary materials and to raise questions through established procedures when materials appear inappropriate for public school use.

RULE:**A. GENERAL PROVISIONS:****1. Appointment of System Library Media Contact Person:**

The Superintendent shall appoint a system library media contact person to serve as a liaison between the District and school library media programs and the Georgia Department of Education.

2. Library Media Committees:

a. Library Media Committees shall be established at the District and school levels.

b. Members:

Each Library Media Committee shall be comprised of at least one representative each of administrative, instructional and library media personnel, student, community and parent representatives. The committees shall act in accordance with the current rules of the Georgia Board of Education.

c. Duties:

The Library Media Committee shall:

(1) Make recommendations and decisions related to planning, operation, evaluation and improvement of the library media program;

(2) Annually develop a multi-year library media plan for budget and services priorities; and

(3) Act in accordance with the current rules of the Georgia Board of Education.

3. The District shall involve the District Library Media Committee or a School Library Media Committee in identifying educational specifications for constructing and renovating library media centers in accordance with guidelines provided on the Georgia Department of Education: Facilities Services Resources.

4. District personnel shall adhere to all Policies and Rules related to library media programs and facilities which have been adopted by the Cobb County Board of Education (Board) and/or Georgia Board of Education and to any relevant state and federal laws.

5. Alternative Assignments:

Professional discretion of the Principal or designee and staff must be used in the use of supplementary materials which might include topics of a sensitive nature as perceived by

the community served. Parents/guardians of a student always have the option of requesting alternative assignments. (See Form IFBC-1 [Guidelines for Selection and Use of High School Parallel Reading Materials] and Form IFBC -2 [Guidelines for Selection and Use of Supplementary Guidance Materials]).

6. **Inspection:**

Parents/guardians may conduct a reasonable inspection, upon request and before administration or use of instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum as provided in Administrative Rule ICC-R (Curriculum Research).

7. **Preview/Permission:**

a. **Preview:**

Library media materials are supplementary in nature and may include items that are not appropriate for required reading/viewing in every classroom. Teachers are responsible for completely previewing all supplemental materials (regardless of their source) before using them for whole-class instruction.

b. **Permission:**

The Teacher, Principal or designee of a school may require written permission (Form IFBC-4 [Parent/Guardian Permission Form for Supplementary Materials]) of parents/guardians prior to the reading/viewing of supplementary library media materials if in his/her opinion the content may be of a sensitive nature within the school's community or the age group served by the school.

B. LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM:

The following regulations shall be observed in the selection of library media materials and the implementation of programming for the District:

1. **Library Media Program Goals:**

- a. To maintain a climate conducive to the students' growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards;
- b. To assist students in the development of the attitudes and skills which will enable them to become independent, lifelong learners;
- c. To assist students by supporting the curriculum and instructional program of the school;
- d. To provide access to materials that support a wide range of student needs, abilities and interests;
- e. To provide a framework for cooperatively-planned, instructionally related, unified library media programming developed at the local level.

2. **Planning for Instruction:**

Library media specialists and teachers shall plan collaboratively to ensure use of library media resources and services which support classroom instruction and implementation of state adopted curriculum. To ensure opportunities for students to develop information access skills:

- a. The library media specialist shall have the primary responsibility for planning with the teacher to link information resources and for recommending opportunities for students to apply these skills during instruction;
- b. The library media specialist shall have the responsibility for providing opportunities for instructional staff to acquire, develop and improve their own information access skills and those of their own students;
- c. The classroom teacher shall have the primary responsibility for planning, instructing and evaluating all units of study in which students and library media specialists are involved.

3. **Accessibility of Facilities and Resources:**

- a. The library media center shall be available for student and teacher use throughout each instructional day of the school year. Flexible scheduling should make resources available at the point and time of need.
- b. Parents/guardians wishing to review instructional materials should make an appointment with the Principal or designee in order not to interrupt the instructional program of the school.
- c. Provision shall be made for access to library media resources to support instruction in any Georgia Board of Education-approved course when offered outside the instructional day.

- d. The library media specialist shall facilitate the use of information sources outside the school which are available through cooperating agencies.
- 4. **Organization of Materials and Equipment:**
 - a. All school owned print and non-print instructional materials and equipment except basic textbooks, items purchased with categorical funds and items useful only in one specific instructional content area shall be organized and made available through the library media center.
 - b. Materials shall be organized based on nationally recognized systems and designs for school media centers.
 - c. Equipment shall be organized so as to provide accurate circulation, maintenance and inventory records.
- 5. **Accounting Procedures:**

The District shall provide a system for school personnel to account for library media materials. School personnel shall use the system in a manner that accurately records the disposition of library media materials:

 - a. The system shall be used to account for library media materials only. (Textbooks, classroom equipment, and other items useful in only one content area shall be accounted for using the systems provided for those items.)
 - b. An inventory of all library media materials and equipment shall be taken at least once every two years.
 - c. Worn, outdated, expended and unused instructional materials shall be discarded or withdrawn. Equipment shall be removed from inventory when no longer functional or needed.
 - d. School personnel shall follow all acquisition and accounting procedures and instructions provided by the District.
- 6. **Operational Procedures:**

The library media specialist in each school, in consultation with the School Library Media Committee, shall provide a procedural manual describing collections, services, facilities and procedures governing library media center operations.
- 7. **Library Media Program Evaluation:**
 - a. The library media specialist and the School Library Media Committee will conduct an annual evaluation of the library media program.
 - b. Findings of the annual evaluation will be used to:
 - (1) Determine program goals,
 - (2) Expand and/or delete services,
 - (3) Revise procedures as necessary, and
 - (4) Develop a three (3) year library media plan that identifies budget and service priorities.
- 8. **Copyright Laws:**
 - a. Adherence to fair use guidelines and other relevant copyright stipulations shall be assured. In no instance shall library media materials and/or equipment be used in such a manner as to violate Board Policy, District Administrative Rules or state and federal law.
 - b. The library media specialist shall be responsible for ensuring the availability of copyright information, dealing with copyright and clearance questions (Administrative Rule GBT-R [Professional Publishing] and Administrative Rule IFBG-R [Internet Acceptable Use]). Provisions for copyright clearance are outlined on Form IFBG-2 (Permission to Use a Third Party Work Copyright Permission Request).

C. MATERIAL SELECTION:

- 1. **Supplementary Materials:**

Supplementary materials are those materials needed for instruction in the curriculum such as books, periodicals, video and audio recordings, computer software and online resources, instructional television programs and other appropriate materials that will enable the District to achieve the goals and objectives of its instructional program.
- 2. **Responsibilities and Criteria for Selection:**

Selection of library media materials by a process of competent evaluation is the responsibility of qualified personnel at the District and school level. The school and District Library Media Committees may serve in an advisory capacity for the selection of library

media materials. The Library Media Committee, whether District or school, shall consider the following criteria before making recommendations for purchase:

- a. The District's philosophy, curriculum and objectives;
- b. Teaching strategies encouraged by the District;
- c. Nature of the school population to be served;
- d. Existing collection; and
- e. Budget priorities.
- f. Technology Items:

In addition to the above criteria, computer software programs and Internet delivered resources with access fees should be tested for compatibility with existing computer equipment and network systems as part of the selection process. To assure the most efficient use of resources, assurances should be obtained from the vendor that all of the features of the software will work in the environment in which it is to be used. To provide this assurance, vendors should be expected to provide an evaluation copy for testing and/or accept returns of software that cannot be made to work in the designated environment within a 90-day period.

3. Specifications for Purchase:

Library media materials are considered for purchase on the basis of the following:

- a. The author or producer should be qualified as a subject specialist;
- b. Concepts, content, and vocabulary should be appropriate for the potential user;
- c. Facts presented should be accurate and up to date;
- d. Information should be logically arranged;
- e. Subject matter should hold the attention of the student;
- f. Format of the material should be attractive and durable;
- g. Illustrations should be pertinent and well executed;
- h. Items should meet a real or potential need;
- i. Evaluations from standard selection aids should be given consideration;
- j. Topics of a sensitive nature (i.e. social, political, religious) should be given a balanced treatment, with both pros and cons represented;
- k. Equipment for purchase shall be considered on the basis of the following:
 - (1) Quality;
 - (2) Durability;
 - (3) Ease of use;
 - (4) Ease of maintenance and serviceability;
 - (5) Functionality;
 - (6) Safety; and
 - (7) Cost.

4. Gifts:

The acceptance of instructional materials as gifts to library media centers must comply with the provisions of Administrative Rule KJ-R (Advertising in the Schools) and may be subject to the review and decisions of the School Library Media Committee. Gifts must contribute to the furtherance of the objectives of the instructional programs and shall be subject to the same evaluation criteria as those used for purchasing materials. Donated material addressing controversial issues must give a balanced treatment of the issues if they are to be accepted for the school library media center. The library media specialist shall keep records of the disposition of gifts for a period of three years.

5. Non-school Owned Materials/Outside Presenters:

All non-school owned print and non-print materials utilized in the instructional program by teachers, students and guest presenters shall be supportive of the adopted curriculum for the course being taught and appropriate for the targeted audience. It is the responsibility of the teacher to preview non-school owned materials prior to use and to inquire of a guest presenter information regarding his/her objectives and the contents of his/her presentation prior to the presentation.

6. Materials Provided by Business and Commercial Concerns:

- a. The intent of the business or commercial concern contributing the material must be judged to be of a community service nature rather than a matter of commercialism.
- b. The use of instructional materials provided by business and commercial concerns must be in keeping with District procedures intended to protect students from commercial

exploitation and to preserve instructional time from non-educational interference. The District's procedures are detailed in Administrative Rule JHA-R (Student Activities Fund Raising) and Administrative Rule KJ-R (Advertising in the Schools).

D. RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS:

Objections may be raised to instructional materials used in the District's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such material were duly qualified to make the selection, followed proper procedure and observed the criteria for selecting such material. To have standing to either initiate a complaint or intervene through the appeal process, a person must be a citizen of Cobb County excluding the city of Marietta. When an individual raises a question concerning the content of any material, the person and the question should be treated with respect for the rights of the questioning individual and the rights of others who may view the material differently.

1. Initial Objection:

The material in question shall remain in use unless removed through the procedure in this section. The Principal or designee should:

- a. Listen to the person's objection and make reasonable efforts to resolve the issue;
- b. Explain the selection process utilized and offer alternative assignments if appropriate and consistent with curriculum requirements;
- c. Refrain from voicing personal opinion;
- d. The Principal's designee should file written documentation of this contact with the Principal; and
- e. In the event the person making an objection to the material is not satisfied with this initial resolution of the situation, the Principal shall explain the selection process and the appeal procedure for challenged materials while refraining from expressing personal opinion.

2. Formal Complaint: School Level:

If, after consultation, the complainant desires to file a formal complaint, a copy of the Instructional Materials Appeal Form (Form IFBC-3) should be given to the complainant by the Principal or designee.

- a. The Instructional Materials Appeal Form (Form IFBC-3) shall be:
 - (1) Completed and signed by the complainant,
 - (2) Filed with the Principal, and
 - (3) A copy should be forwarded to the Supervisor of Library Media Education and the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.
 - (4) Any Instructional Materials Appeal Forms received within the last thirty (30) calendar days of the school year may be referred for Committee action the following school year.
- b. The complainant should be notified in writing that the Instructional Materials Appeal Form (Form IFBC-3) has been received and that the District's appeal procedure has been initiated.
- c. If the challenged material has been checked out from the school by the complainant, the material must be returned to the school before the appeal will be considered.
- d. A complainant may request alternative assignments to the challenged material for his/her student. Any alternative assignments must be appropriate and consistent with curriculum requirements.
- e. **Complaint Review:**

The complaint should be considered by the School Media Committee. The review process is as follows:

 - (1) Any action taken related to challenged materials should be taken by action of the entire School Library Media Committee and not by an individual, including the Principal.
 - (2) The School Library Media Committee should meet and render a decision within forty-five (45) working days after receipt of the Instructional Materials Appeal Form (Form IFBC-3).
 - (3) Prior to evaluating the complaint, Committee members should:
 - (a) Read, view, or listen to the material in question in its entirety,
 - (b) Read the Instructional Materials Appeal Form completed by the complainant, and

- (c) Read available professional evaluations pertaining to the material under review. The Library Media Specialist and/or Supervisor of Library Media Education should compile necessary professional evaluations of the material in question.
 - (4) When Committee members have completed the steps outlined in Section (3) above, the School Library Media Committee should meet to:
 - (a) Review the concerns expressed,
 - (b) Discuss the materials relative to appropriateness to grade level and curriculum. In determining the suitability and value of the material, the Committee should consider the following:
 - 1) Relevance;
 - 2) Pervasive vulgarity;
 - 3) Quality, content and manner of presentation, and appropriateness to age, sophistication and grade level of students; and
 - 4) Space limitations and obsolescence.
 - (c) Render a majority decision relative to requested actions as long as a quorum is present. The decision should be communicated to the Principal and may be to:
 - 1) Take no removal action;
 - 2) Remove the challenged material from the local school if the Committee finds the material is pervasively vulgar and/or lacking in educational value throughout;
 - 3) Place the material at another school level; or
 - 4) Regulate the assignment of the material.
 - (d) Review a subsequent appeal on the same item at the discretion of the School Library Media Committee.
 - f. **Notification:**
 Within five (5) working days of the School Library Media Committee decision, the Principal or designee should:
 - (1) Officially notify the complainant in writing by first class mail of the decision reached and advise of the procedures to appeal including the ten (10) work day limitation; and
 - (2) File a copy of the Committee's decision with the Supervisor of Library Media Education and the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.
 - g. Implementation of a decision rendered by the school or District Library Media Committee should be held in abeyance until the appeal process is exhausted.
3. **Formal Complaint: District Level:**
- a. Any appeal to reverse a school Library Media Committee's decision must be made at the District level. Such written appeals may be filed by the complainant or any administrator, library media specialist, teacher or parent/guardian from the school where the complaint was filed.
 - b. Appeals resulting from the decision of the school Library Media Committee must be made in writing within ten (10) working days of the date the school Library Media Committee's decision was mailed to the complainant.
 - c. The final decision on any item challenged to the District Library Media Committee is binding only at the school where the complaint was initiated. A subsequent appeal on the same item may be reviewed at the discretion of the District Library Media Committee.
 - d. **Complaint Review:**
 - (1) The complainant shall address a written request for appeal using the Instructional Materials Appeal Form (Form IFBC-3) to the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.
 - (2) If the complainant does not initiate an appeal within ten (10) working days the case is considered closed.
 - (3) Upon receipt of the appeal, the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning or designee should:
 - (a) Notify the complainant in writing that the appeal has been received and the District level appeal procedure has been initiated;
 - (b) Convene the District Library Media Committee who should render a decision within forty-five (45) working days after receipt of the Instructional Materials Appeal Form; and

- (c) Notify the Principal of the appeal and the action taken by the District Library Media Committee.
- e. **Notification:**
 Within five (5) working days of the school Library Media Committee decision, the Supervisor of Library Media Education or designee should:
 - (1) Officially notify the Principal of the decision reached and advise of the procedures to appeal including the ten (10) work day limitation; and
 - (2) Officially notify the complainant in writing by first class mail of the decision reached and advise of the procedures to appeal including the ten (10) work day limitation; and
 - (3) File a copy of the Committee's decision with the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and the Chief Academic Officer.
- f. Implementation of a decision rendered by the District Library Media Committee should be held in abeyance until the appeal process is exhausted.
- 4. **Formal Complaint: Board of Education:**
 - a. Appeal beyond the District Library Media Committee must be in writing using the Instructional Materials Appeal Form (Form IFBC-3) directed to the Chief Academic Officer who should provide information to the Superintendent and the Board of Education.
 - b. Appeals must be made within ten (10) working days after written notification has been mailed, first class mail, to the complainant of the decision of the District Media Committee. If an appeal is not filed within the ten (10) working days, the case is considered closed.
 - c. Upon receiving a written appeal, the Board of Education should schedule a response in a timely and expedient manner.
 - d. The Chief Academic Officer or designee should notify the principal of the appeal and the action taken by the Board of Education.
 - e. The principal or designee should notify in writing by first class U.S. mail the parties involved in the appeal apprising them of the decision reached.
- 5. **Procedural Organization for School or District Media Committee:**
 The Media Committee considering a complaint or appeal, may appoint a subcommittee of members to review and resolve challenges. The composition of this subcommittee should approximate the representation of the full committee. Additional community members should be added to the District or school committees so that community representatives outnumber District representatives by one.
- 6. **Review of Selection and Appeal Procedures:**
 - a. The Principal or designee should review the selection criteria and appeal procedures for challenged materials with all staff annually.
 - b. The staff should be reminded that the right to object to material is one granted by the Board.
 - c. The Supervisor of Library Media Education should annually communicate selection criteria and the appeal procedures with all library media specialists and Principals.
 - d. The District Library Media Committee should annually review the selection and appeal procedures to determine if revisions are needed.

Adopted: 8/9/78

Revised: 4/28/83; 8/8/84; 4/13/88; 7/14/94; 7/28/94; 8/26/02

Reclassified an Administrative Rule: 9/1/04

Revised: 12/14/06; 5/9/07; 6/11/08

Revised and re-coded: 9/27/12 (Previously coded as Administrative Rule IJK)

Revised: 5/5/17

Legal Reference

O.C.G.A. 20-02-0167	Funding for direct instructional, media center and staff development costs; submission of budget
O.C.G.A. 20-02-0168	Distribution of federal funds; summer school programs; year-round operation
O.C.G.A. 20-02-0184	Program weights to reflect funds for media specialists
O.C.G.A. 20-02-0305	County and regional libraries
Rule 160-4-4-.01	Media Programs
Rule 160-5-1-.22	Personnel Required