

TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Board of Education is responsible for the selection and designation of all textbooks to be used in the district schools. Consistent with Education Law §1711, the Superintendent of Schools is charged with establishing and leading administrators and appropriate staff with the process of evaluation, recommendation to the school board via the Superintendent of Schools, and subsequent district adoption of textbooks for purchase and use.

The Superintendent of Schools is charged with establishing and periodically updating a concise district-wide protocol for establishing administrator/staff ad-hoc committees to evaluate prospective new textbooks and to select recommended new textbooks. That protocol is to include a brief review *[if it already exists]* or the construction of *[if it has not yet been constructed]* a concise, up-to-date school district course of study for any elementary grades content area or secondary grades course for which an updated textbook is to be recommended. The updated course of study is to be used as one component in that district-wide protocol. The intent is to help ensure a reasonable match between the particular updated course of study for our students and the new textbook. The protocol is to include use of a comparison chart to be used by ad-hoc textbook selection committees to help such committees compare one prospective textbook with other prospective textbooks.

The Superintendent of Schools is further charged with establishing and periodically updating a multi-year timetable for particular elementary grades content areas and secondary grades courses for which updated textbooks will be considered. The intent of such a timetable is to help administrators and staff set priorities for updated textbooks and to help administrators and staff prepare in advance for review and/or updating of concise courses of study and for obtaining on a timely basis prospective new textbooks to be considered for particular disciplines and grade levels/courses. That timetable is to be constructed by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with building administrators and program administrators. Those building and program administrators may further consult with department coordinators and/or grade level coordinators from their schools, in order for those administrators to better advise the Superintendent of Schools on a reasonable and practical timetable for updating of course outlines and textbooks recommended for adoption.

The following criteria are to be considered in the selection of textbooks:

1. textbook or material should have been copyrighted within the past five years;
2. qualifications of the author(s) on the subject;
3. adaptability to existing instructional program;
4. accuracy of the information presented;
5. sufficient scope to meet the requirements of the curriculum as developed locally and approved by the State Education Department;

6. objectivity and impartiality in treatment of subject matter and freedom from bias and prejudice;
7. high quality format in respect to typography, arrangement of materials or pages, cover design, size and margins;
8. appropriateness to grade level as to vocabulary, sentence structure, and organization;
9. textbook series should meet grade-to-grade requirements. They should contain supplementary aids to learning, when desirable and necessary, such as a table of contents, introduction, study activities, exercises, questions, problems, selected references, bibliography, index glossary and appendices;
10. texts should include appropriate illustrative materials--pictures, maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, etc., which clarify the text and enrich the content;
11. materials should fairly represent the many ethnic and cultural groups and their contribution to American heritage pursuant to policy 4350; and
12. a reasonable balance of viewpoints regarding controversial issues should be presented.

The following criteria are to be considered in the selection of literary works for classroom use in teaching literature, as well as the assignment of such works to particular grade levels:

1. use of a compositional style which contributes to the reader's critical and appreciative understanding of the work;
2. sophisticated use of literary devices (i.e., metaphor, point of view, tone) to further student understanding of written concepts;
3. levels of student maturity and experience necessary for empathic reading of literature;
4. capacity of a work to capture student interest;
5. thematic treatment which promotes sound and healthy values for students;
6. intrinsic qualities that establish a work as a significant part of the literary heritage; and
7. variety to avoid duplication of theme, plot, setting, etc., unless such duplication affords opportunities for comparison and contrast or serves to reinforce understanding.

Cross-ref: 1420, Complaints about Curricula or Instructional Materials

Ref: Education Law §§701 et seq.; 1711; 2508; 2566

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