

Chapter 4. School Library Programs.
Subchapter A. Standards and Guidelines.

§4.0. Purpose and Scope.

Education Code, §33.021(a) charges the commission with adopting voluntary standards for school library services, other than collection development, that a school district must consider in developing, implementing, or expanding library services. Education Code, §33.021(b) charges the commission with adopting school library collection development standards a school district shall adhere to in developing or implementing the district's library collection development policies. The purpose of this subchapter is to establish both the voluntary standards for services other than collection development and the mandatory minimum standards for a district's collection development policy, which is a primary tool to ensure students benefit from a robust learning environment with opportunities for voluntary inquiry and selection of library materials.

§4.2. School Library Programs: Collection Development Standards.

- (a) Each Texas public school district board or governing body must approve and institute a collection development policy that describes the processes and standards by which a school library acquires, maintains, and withdraws materials.
- (b) School library collections should include materials that are age appropriate and suitable to the campus and students it serves and include a range of materials. A school library collection should:
 - (1) Enrich and support the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), while taking into consideration students' varied interests, abilities, and learning styles;
 - (2) Foster growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and societal standards;
 - (3) Encourage the enjoyment of reading to foster thinking skills and encourage discussion based on rational analysis; and
 - (4) Represent ethnic, religious, and cultural groups and their contribution to Texas, the nation, and the world.
- (c) A school library collection development policy must:
 - (1) Describe the purpose and collection development goals;
 - (2) Designate the responsibility for collection development;
 - (3) Establish procedures for the evaluation, selection, acquisition, reconsideration, and deselection of materials;
 - (4) Include an access plan that, at a minimum, allows efficient parental access to the school district's library and online library catalog;
 - (5) Include a process to determine and administer student access to material rated by library material vendors as "sexually relevant" as defined by Education Code, §35.001 (relating to Definitions) consistent with the requirements of Education Code, Chapter 35, policies adopted by the Texas Education Agency, and local school board requirements; and
 - (6) Comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including Education Code, §33.021 (relating to Library Standards). Specifically, a collection development policy must:
 - (A) Prohibit the possession, acquisition, and purchase of harmful material, as defined by Penal Code, §43.24; library material rated sexually explicit material by the selling library material

- vendor; or library material that is pervasively vulgar or educationally unsuitable as referenced in *Pico v. Board of Education*, 457 U.S. 853 (1982);
- (B) Recognize that obscene content is not protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution;
 - (C) Apply to all library materials available for use or display, including material contained in school libraries, classroom libraries, and online catalogs;
 - (D) Recognize that parents are the primary decision makers regarding their student's access to library material;
 - (E) Encourage schools to provide library catalog transparency, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) Online catalogs that are publicly available; and
 - (ii) Information about titles and how and where material can be accessed.
 - (F) Recommend schools communicate effectively with parents regarding collection development, including, but not limited to:
 - (i) Access to district/campus policies relating to school libraries;
 - (ii) Consistent access to library resources; and
 - (iii) Opportunities for students, parents, educators, and community members to provide feedback on library materials and services; and
 - (G) Prohibit the removal of material based solely on the ideas contained in the material or the personal background of the author of the material or characters in the material.
- (d) Evaluation of materials as referenced in this section includes a consideration of the factors described in subsection (b) of this section and at least two of the following:
- (1) Consideration of authoritative reviews of the items from sources such as professional journals in library science, recognized professional education or content journals with book reviews, national and state award recognition lists, library science field experts, and highly acclaimed author and literacy expert recommendations;
 - (2) Consideration of recommendations from parents, guardians, and local community members;
 - (3) Consultation with their school district's educators and library staff and/or consultation with library staff of similarly situated school districts and their collections and collection development policies;
 - (4) An extensive review of the text of item; and
 - (5) The context of a work, including consideration of the contextual characteristics, overall fit within existing school library collection, and potential support of the school curriculum.
- (e) A reconsideration process as referenced in this section should ensure that any parent or guardian, school district employee, or individual residing within a school's district boundaries may request the reconsideration of a specific item in the library catalog. A reconsideration process should:
- (1) Require any person requesting reconsideration to begin the process by contacting the school librarian to discuss the item of concern. If the concern is not resolved satisfactorily, the reconsideration process should direct the requestor to submit an official request for reconsideration;
 - (2) Require a school district to include a form to request a reconsideration of an item on the school's website;
 - (3) Require that the request for reconsideration form be distributed to both the campus administrator and school librarian at the time of submission;

- (4) Include a reasonable timeframe, approved by the school board, for the review and decision, during which time the material should remain available. A reasonable timeframe should take into account:
 - (A) The time necessary to convene a committee to meet and review the item;
 - (B) Flexibility that may be necessary depending on the number of pending reconsideration requests; and
 - (C) Other factors relevant to a fair and consistent process, including informing the requester on the progress of the review in a timely fashion; and
- (5) Ensure sufficient levels of review and any necessary appeal(s).
- (f) School districts should ensure a certified professional librarian or other dedicated professional library staff trained on proper collection development standards is responsible for the selection and acquisition of library materials.
- (g) A school district should develop collection assessment and evaluation procedures to periodically appraise the quality of library materials in the school library to ensure the library's goals, objectives, and information needs are serving its community and should stipulate the means to weed or update the collection.
- (h) A school district's collection development policy should be reviewed at least every two years and updated as necessary.
- (i) School districts may add procedures to these minimum requirements to satisfy local needs so long as the added procedures do not conflict with these minimum requirements.
- (j) School districts are responsible for ensuring their school libraries implement and adhere to these collection development standards.