



INSTRUCTION: INSTRUCTION

Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials

I. Purpose

- A. Under the direction of the superintendent, the Division of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) is responsible for the evaluation and selection of instructional materials in order to secure and make available for students and instructional staff instructional materials that support the curriculum and goals of the Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board).
- B. C&I will coordinate with the Division of Business Services and stakeholders to evaluate, select, and procure instructional materials.
- C. Instructional materials will be evaluated and selected so that the materials used for teaching and learning environments support the curriculum and meet the diverse needs of students.
- D. The instructional materials that have been recommended for selection by C&I will be forwarded to the Board for adoption.

II. Definition

- A. Instructional materials are defined as those items that are designed to instruct students in the teaching/learning process regardless of delivery method and/or format. Instructional materials may be consumable and expendable and include, but are not limited to such items as charts, kits, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, pictures, recordings, slides, transparencies, videos, video discs, workbooks, and electronic resources such as software, CD-ROMs, and online services.

III. Evaluation

- A. The following criteria shall be applied to evaluate instructional materials:
 - 1. Guidelines outlined in cultural contexts for learning: a desktop reference for educators;
 - 2. Instructional materials must be:
 - a. Aligned to the BCPS curriculum and support student achievement;
 - b. Accurate and current in terms of content;

- c. Representative of the pluralistic nature and diversity of a global society;
- d. Free of bias, stereotype, discrimination, and prejudice;
- e. Age/grade appropriate for the students for which the materials will be used;
- f. Representative of different viewpoints and perspectives on controversial subjects;
- g. Value in terms of purchase price;
- h. Comply with BCPS hardware and network standards to ensure optimum performance of electronic, digital, and web-based instructional materials;
- i. Comply with federal and state laws regarding accessibility for all students;
- j. Free of questions or activities that invade personal or family privacy by requiring students to reveal private, personal or family information, such as parental or personal relationships, political beliefs, and religious and moral attitudes.

3. Gifts and donations of instructional materials are not exempt from, and must comply with, the essential selection criteria, as outlined in paragraph III. A. above.

B. The process and forms to be used in the selection of instructional materials will be published in the *Curriculum Development Handbook*

IV. Selection Committees

A. Each office within C&I is responsible for the evaluation and selection process of materials specific to its area of instruction.

B. Each office head shall appoint a subject-area Selection Committee.

1. Each selection committee will consist of C&I staff, teachers, department chairs, school-based administrators, and other personnel, as appropriate and as deemed necessary by the office head.

C. Each office head shall ensure that the Selection Committee meets and makes recommendations in accordance with the timeframe necessary to ensure that the selection of instructional materials coincides with the adoption of new curriculum and/or the established deadlines for updating online instructional materials catalogs.

- D. Each office head will maintain documentation of the Selection Committee's recommendations. The documentation shall include a summary of the materials reviewed, each committee member's evaluation form, and the committee's reasons for selection or rejection of the instructional materials.
- E. The office head will forward the Selection Committee's recommendation to the executive director and to the associate superintendent, C&I, for final action.

V. Public Review

- A. Each office head will prepare and advertise on the school system's Web page that the materials recommended for selection are available for review and will be open for review for thirty calendar days.
 - 1. The public notice will include the location where the materials may be reviewed.
 - 2. The materials will be available for review during regular business hours.
- B. The materials recommended for selection will remain in the public exhibit for 30 calendar days to permit review by professional staff, parents, and the public before procuring the materials for school or school system purchase.
- C. Representatives of the Division of C&I will be available to respond to questions upon request.

VI. Citizen Comment on Instructional Materials

- A. Should a professional staff member, parent, or the public wish to provide feedback concerning the instructional materials, they may do so by completing the *Citizen's Review of Instructional Materials* form (Form A). (See Rule 6002, Form A).
- B. The completed Form A shall be forwarded to the associate superintendent, C&I, who will forward the form to the appropriate office head for review and response.
 - 1. If the instructional materials in question are currently being used in instructional programs, the materials will not be withdrawn from use during the reconsideration process.

- C. Each office head will establish a standing committee composed of representatives from its Selection Committee for the purpose of reviewing citizen feedback submitted on Form A.
 - 1. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of Form A:
 - a. A copy of the written response shall be forwarded to the associate superintendent, C&I.
 - b. Failure by the standing committee to submit the decision within the stated time does not mean that any party has become the prevailing party.

VII. Appeals

A. Appeal to the Superintendent

- 1. If a person is dissatisfied with the decision of the Standing Committee, he/she may appeal the decision in writing to the superintendent.
 - a. All appeals must be in writing and will be deemed timely if postmarked or delivered within **15** calendar days of the date of the Standing Committee's decision.
- 2. The superintendent will establish a Review Board which will be responsible for evaluating the complaint and issuing a final decision on behalf of the superintendent.
 - a. The Review Board will be composed of the coordinator of the office involved, the executive director, and no fewer than two assistant superintendents.
- 3. The Review Board will, upon review of the documentation and in consultation with appropriate staff, respond in writing to the appellant.

B. Appeal to the Board of Education.

1. Requests to appeal the decision of the superintendent must be made in writing to the president of the Board of Education in the time limits provided by law. The appeals must be related to the original content of the *Citizen's Response to the Review of Instructional Materials* form.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Education Article §4-205, *Powers and duties of the county superintendent.*

Rule
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Superintendent of Schools