

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS POLICY

All materials selected for our MSD Decatur school libraries shall be recommended by our licensed school media specialists through evaluation of the existing library resources, consultation with professional selection aids, and staff suggestions.

All materials shall be consistent with the following selection criteria:

1. Resources shall be chosen to enrich and support the curriculum and personal needs of users.
2. Resources shall meet high-quality standards in:
 - a. Educational significance
 - b. Readability based on grade levels of a particular library/media center
 - c. Age appropriateness based on the ability levels, social development levels, and emotional development of the students served by the library/media center
 - d. Artistic quality and/or literary style
 - e. Factual content and accuracy (including current accuracy of information)
 - f. Technical quality
 - g. Presentation/physical format
 - h. Professional review sources, where available
 - i. Appeal to a diverse group of readers
 - j. Representation of our diverse student body
3. The selection of learning resources on controversial topics shall maintain a balance representing various viewpoints.

Despite the careful selection of materials by qualified professionals, objections to library resources may occasionally occur. Persons with a concern about library resources should state their concerns to the school library/media specialist or principal. Any parent/guardian of a student or a community member living within the school district may raise an objection to a library media resource. The library staff or principal will listen to the concerns and attempt to resolve the issue informally. As part of this discussion, the principal or certified school library/media specialist will explain the library's selection policy and selection criteria. The party inquiring about the resource will have the opportunity to explain their concerns.

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If the complaint is not resolved informally, the certified school library/media specialist or principal will explain the formal reconsideration process and provide the individual with a copy of the district's "Procedure for Formal Requests for Reconsideration of Library Materials" and a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources" form. Any parent/guardian of an MSD Decatur student or any community member who lives within the school district may request a formal review for reconsideration of a library resource that is obscene (as described in IC 35-49-2-1) or harmful to minors (as described in IC 35-49-2-2). This right is guaranteed by Indiana Law (IC 2-26-5.5). A challenged item will be considered in its entirety, not judged solely on portions taken out of context. Challenged items will remain in circulation during the reconsideration process.

Here are the definitions of obscene material and material harmful to minors:

IC 35-49-2-1

Obscene matter or performance

Sec. 1. A matter or performance is obscene for purposes of this article if:

- (1) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, finds that the dominant theme of the matter or performance, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest in sex;
- (2) the matter or performance depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct; and
- (3) the matter or performance, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

IC 35-49-2-2

Matter or performance harmful to minors

Sec. 2. A matter or performance is harmful to minors for purposes of this article if:

- (1) it describes or represents, in any form, nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse;
- (2) considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest in sex of minors;
- (3) it is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable matter for or performance before minors; and
- (4) considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

PROCEDURE FOR FORMAL REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

1. The school principal or certified school library/media specialist will explain the reconsideration process and provide the individual with a copy of the "Procedure for Formal Requests for Reconsideration of Library Materials" and a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form.
2. Any parent or guardian of a student enrolled at MSD Decatur, as well as any community member living within the MSD Decatur district boundaries, has the right to submit a request for removal of material from the school library that is obscene (as described in Indiana Law: IC 35-49-2-1) or harmful to minors (as described in Indiana Law: IC 35-49-2-2).
3. If there is concern about multiple items, a separate form will need to be completed for each item.
4. Upon receipt of the completed form, the principal will notify and provide a copy of the form to the office of the superintendent and the certified school library/media specialist. The principal and/or certified school library/media specialist shall notify and work in consultation with the superintendent's office.
5. The material in question shall remain in circulation until a final decision is made.
6. The certified school media specialist shall provide the principal, the office of the superintendent, and the school board with copies of the material under reconsideration, as well as information about the challenged material. The information about the challenged material will include, but not be limited to, any professional reviews of the material, any awards the material has won, and information about the merits of the material from staff, such as the certified library/media specialist or other teachers. This information will be provided to the school board members at least five days before the next scheduled board meeting.
7. The school board members will examine the challenged material and the additional information provided by the certified school library/media specialist. At the next meeting of the school board, the school board will vote to retain the resource, move the resource to a different level (such as a move from elementary libraries to middle school libraries), or remove the resource.
8. The school board's decision will be final and binding and will preclude all other requests for the same material for one calendar year. The principal and/or certified library/media specialist will implement the decision.
9. The principal will communicate the decision to the parent, guardian, or community member within 10 days of the school board meeting at which the reconsideration request is reviewed.