

Selection & Adoption of Instructional Materials

Statement of Policy

State law requires the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) to establish Core Standards to identify what individual students should be able to know and do at each grade level. The Renaissance Academy Board is legally responsible for adopting or approving textbooks, instructional and supplementary materials, including library materials, for use in elementary and secondary schools. The Board delegates to the professional staff the responsibility for evaluating and selecting learning materials, reserving to the Board of Education the right to approve or disapprove the final recommendation.

The Board also recognizes the importance of freedom of inquiry and study, as guaranteed by Constitutional and First Amendment protections. The Board of Education further recognizes that school libraries offer a place and opportunity for the exercise of intellectual freedom and the right to read, inquire, study, and evaluate outside of the setting of formal instruction. The Board asserts that school libraries are different from public libraries in that they are not open to the public, they primarily serve the school's students (who are minors), and they are part of the school's instructional resources. Concerning library materials, this policy specifies the process for identifying materials to be included in schools and libraries based on principles of freedom of expression and belief, high content standards, age appropriateness, and adherence to state and federal law. ([Utah Code 53G-10-103](#)), Sensitive Instructional Materials, [Board Rule R277-217-18 and 19](#) - Educator Standards and LEA Reporting)

All employees of Renaissance Academy must adhere to this policy and are subject to the employee Code of Conduct in the event of any violation.

Definitions

- 1) "Material" means anything printed or written or any picture, drawing, photograph, motion picture, or pictorial representation, any statue or other figure, any recording or transcription, or any mechanical, chemical, or electrical reproduction, or anything which is or may be used as a means of communication. Material includes undeveloped photographs, molds, printing plates, and other latent representational objects. [Utah Code](#)
- 2) "Primary instructional materials" means materials purchased with District funds, with the expectation that they will be the primary source of information and instruction used in District classrooms in a grade level, course, or subject area.
- 3) "Supplementary materials" are materials used in addition to primary materials and include but are not limited to software, manipulatives, and other items intended for regular use in a particular classroom, grade level, or subject area. Supplementary materials include leveled libraries.
- 4) "Incidental Materials" means pictures, quotations, video clips, and other materials intended to be used as part of a single unit during classroom instruction. Incidental materials include classroom libraries.
- 5) "Instructional material" means information, regardless of format, which is used either
 - a) As or in place of textbooks to deliver instruction to students within the state curriculum framework or
 - b) To support a student's learning in the school setting. It may include reading materials, handouts, videos, digital materials, websites, online applications, and live presentations.

[Utah Code § 53G-10-103\(1\)\(a\) \(2022\)](#)

- 6) "Library material" means any text, digital media (including audio or visual media), or other material (as defined above) contained within a school library's collection. Utah Admin. Rules [R277-628-2\(1\)](#)
- 7) "Sensitive material" means instructional material that is pornographic or indecent, as those terms are defined in [Utah Code § 76-10-1235](#).
- 8) "Age appropriate" means generally suitable for students of the same age or level of social, emotional, and cognitive development when considering the ages of all minors who could be exposed to or have access to the material.
- 9) "Instructional material review committee" means a committee of an odd number of persons formed to determine an appropriate course of action when instructional or library materials are challenged or for other necessary purposes.
- 10) The Executive Director shall organize the committee, consisting of at least one school administrator, one teacher from the school, and one more parent than the total number of employees. The committee shall be reflective of the membership of the school community.
- 11) Parent committee members must have students enrolled in and attending the school.
- 12) The Executive Director or their designee shall serve as the committee chair. [Utah Code § 53G-10-103\(3\) \(2022\)](#)
- 13) "Retained" means the determination to maintain access in a school setting to the challenged material for all students.
- 14) "Restricted" means the determination to keep but restrict access in a school setting to be accessible only by permission of a parent/guardian. This includes evaluating the age-appropriate use of the material and the age group for which it will be accessible without restriction, if any.
- 15) "Removed" means the determination to deselect challenged materials from the school or district libraries and classrooms.
- 16) "Replace" means the determination to replace removed instructional material with similar ideas or themes that do not contain sensitive material.

2

Procedures

Materials Management

- 1) The purpose of materials management shall be to implement, enrich, and support the educational program at Renaissance Academy. Instructional materials are part of an instructional system, including curricula, professional learning, educator evaluation, and student assessment, which should be aligned and support the school's goals and objectives.
- 2) The evaluation process shall consider
 - a) State-recommended instructional materials (RIMs) and identification of the instructional materials most appropriate for use at Renaissance;
 - b) Identification of funding for the adoption process, implementation, and professional development costs;

- c) Identification of funding for new primary instructional materials adoption and support material costs;
- d) Establish guidelines for the reuse or disposal of primary instructional materials.
- e) Instructional materials cannot be approved for use at Renaissance Academy if the materials contain Sensitive material as defined in this policy. Utah Code § 53G-10-103(2)

Standards for Instructional Materials

- 1) To be approved for use, instructional materials shall meet the following standards:
 - a) Aligned with the Utah State Core standards;
 - b) Of high quality, evidence-based, and proven effective in supporting student learning;
 - c) Age-appropriate with varying levels of learning;
 - d) Objective and providing a balanced viewpoint of issues;
 - e) Accurate and factual;
 - f) Arranged chronologically or systematically, or both;
 - g) Free from sensitive materials.
 - h) Free from sexual, ethnic, age, gender, or disability bias and stereotyping;
 - i) Focused on enhancing, or helping students achieve mastery of the Core Standards;
 - j) Including enrichment and extension possibilities; and
 - k) Compatible with school technology systems, adhering to high standards of technical quality and ease of use; and
 - l) Compliance with data privacy laws

Selection and Adoption of Instructional Materials

- 1) Primary instructional materials for core programs shall be uniform throughout the school and shall be adopted as follows.
 - a) The Curriculum Director will organize Curriculum Review Committees as needed. The Committee is authorized to vet any instructional materials. When the committee vets instructional materials, it may reject, recommend, or adopt them.
 - b) The Curriculum Review Committee must include faculty members representing the grade levels for which materials are being considered
 - c) In evaluating the materials, the committee shall consider whether the instructional materials meet the standards set forth herein.
 - d) The Curriculum Review Committee may adopt, recommend, or reject the primary materials.
 - e) The committee will present their findings to the Executive Director for review and comment.
 - f) The Executive Director and Committee members will present their recommended selections to the Renaissance Board of Directors for final approval.
- 2) Supplementary instructional materials may be adopted at the school level under the

executive director's or their designee's supervision and guidance.

- a) The person or body evaluating the materials shall consider whether the instructional materials meet the standards. In approving supplementary or incidental materials, the Executive Director or their designee shall consider
 - i) the educational purpose of the material.
 - ii) Determine if the material is age-appropriate
 - iii) If it contains sensitive material.
 - iv) Applicable copyright protections
- 3) Individual teachers may select incidental materials but must comply with the general standards. If it contains software or a digital component, it must be approved by the IT Department.
 - a) Classroom Displays
 - b) Materials displayed in and around a classroom are generally considered instructional materials and must comply with this policy. The classroom teacher may select them, but they are subject to review by the school administration.
 - c) Consistent with the Renaissance Code of Conduct, classrooms are not public forums for displaying or promoting political, religious, or personal viewpoints, and employees may not use them for such purposes. ([Utah Code 53G-10-402\(6\)](#))
 - d) Displays in schools or classrooms may reasonably be perceived as having school approval. Therefore, they constitute government speech under the First Amendment, subject to control by the school. The school administration may remove materials that do not conveying the school's educational message. An educator or employee who uses instructional time or space to convey a political, religious, or personal message may be subject to disciplinary action after being directed not to.
- 4) Individual Classroom Teachers
 - a) Teachers can use other supplementary and incidental text, digital, audio, etc., materials to enhance an instructional standard or learning objective. They must adhere to established materials standards outlined herein.
 - b) All teachers must prepare a disclosure/syllabus document with the materials used for the course duration, whether semester or year-long.
 - c) The class disclosure/syllabus should be available online.
 - d) Teachers will notify parents if a substantial change to instructional materials
 - e) identified in the disclosure/syllabus will be made.
 - f) Teachers that post their instructional materials in a district-supported learning management system (CANVAS, Google Classroom, Nearpod, etc.) should
 - g) encourage parents to monitor changes to instructional materials through teacher postings.
- 5) Online Resources
 - a) Renaissance Academy shall maintain an internet content filter in compliance with Federal CIPA regulations.
 - b) During the review and approval process of instructional material, a school administrator will confirm that the needed online resources are available or can be made available through the content filter.
 - c) Upon any request to allow an online resource for use as a school or classroom resource, the technology staff will promptly review the resource for compliance with data privacy laws and confirm that the resource aligns with the instructional materials standards outlined herein.

Library Materials and Use

1. School libraries are responsible for introducing students to the world of information. Students have the right to a relevant, balanced, and diverse school library collection representing multiple viewpoints.
2. The school library at Renaissance Academy is guided by the principles outlined in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
3. Renaissance Academy administrators or their designees seek recommendations and work collaboratively with others in the school community during the selection process. Selection is conducted within the criteria and procedures established by the school.
4. The selection criteria will allow for selections that provide a collection of diverse ideas and authors and reflect the library's population. Gifts and donations shall be reviewed according to the criteria adopted by the board of directors and will be accepted or rejected consistent with the following guidance. Material selection will consider the work's
 - a. Overall purpose and educational significance;
 - b. Contribution and relevance to the Utah state standards for K-12 education and interests of the students, including varied interests that reflect religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds;
 - c. Whether factual content is accurate, current, reliable, and authoritative;
 - d. Its timeliness or permanence
 - e. The readability and accessibility to the intended audience;
 - f. Favorable reviews found in standard selection sources;
 - g. Artistic quality and literary style;
 - h. Age and developmental appropriateness
 - i. Reputation and significance of the author, producer, or publisher;
 - j. Variety of formats with efforts to incorporate emerging technologies;
 - k. Quality and value are commensurate with cost or need;
5. **Collection Maintenance and Weeding**
 - a. Annually, the school librarian will conduct an inventory of the library collection and equipment. The inventory can be used to determine losses and remove damaged or worn materials, which can be considered for replacement. The inventory can also be used to deselect and remove materials irrelevant to the curriculum or of interest to students.
6. **Reconsideration**
 - a. Any parent, employee, or student of the LEA may express a formal request for reconsideration of library material. The LEA recognizes the rights of parents under state law 53G-10-205.2. a-b, to restrict their child's access to materials the parent deems inappropriate. However, no parent has the right to make that decision on behalf of other students. If the material is a required part of classroom curriculum activities, the parent must follow the procedures for waiver contained in the LEA Policy.
 - b. Questioned items remain in circulation during the reconsideration process. c) The Library Media Review Committee is composed of individuals who are representative of the school/LEA community.
 - c. The Library Media Review Committee is created to review library media materials when material is challenged.
 - d. The reconsideration procedure is as follows
 - i. Challenges to library media materials shall be submitted in writing using the school reconsideration form (Appendix A).
 - ii. Each committee member shall receive a copy of the challenge and the challenged material before the meeting. Committee members shall read the challenged material in its entirety before the committee meeting.
 - iii. The committee shall discuss the challenged material based on the school's

selection criteria.

- iv. The committee shall recommend the challenged material determined by a majority vote.
- v. The committee communicates its decision to the designated administrator, who then communicates it to the objecting party.