BOOK SELECTION AND AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Part I

SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The policy of the Millinocket School Board is to provide a wide range of learning resources at varying levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view to meet the needs of students and teachers.

II. OBJECTIVES OF SELECTION

For the purposes of this statement of policy, the term "learning resources" will refer to any person(s) or any material (whether acquired or locally produced) with instructional content or function that is used for formal or informal teaching/learning purposes. Learning resources include textbooks, other books, supplementary reading and informational materials, charts, community resource people, agencies and organizations, computer software, filmstrips, flash cards, games, globes, maps, microfiche/microfilm, periodicals, video and audiocassettes, transparencies, realia, pictures, slides, and videodiscs.

It is the policy of the Millinocket School Board to require that materials selected for our schools be accordance with the following:

*To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students served;

*To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards;

*To provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives;

*To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop, under guidance, the practices of analytical reading and thinking;

*To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our national heritage and the world community;

*To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of
materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection of learning resources appropriate to the school and community.

III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Materials for school classrooms and school libraries shall be initially proposed by appropriate professional personnel in consultation with administration and faculty. Final decision on purchases shall rest with the Superintendent or his/her designee, subject to official adoption by the School Board in the case of basic textbooks.

While selection of learning resources involves many people (administrators, library/media specialists, teachers, students, community persons, state consultants), the responsibility for coordinating the selection of school learning resources and making the recommendation for purchase rests with the Superintendent, Principals, and professional personnel.

IV. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES:

IJJ TEXTBOOKS

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials applies to textbooks. Textbooks and textbook programs shall be chosen:

*To advance the educational objectives of the school system and particular objectives of the course or program;

*To contribute toward continuity, integration and articulation of the curriculum;

*To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

IJL LIBRARY MATERIALS

The primary objective of the school library/media center is to implement, enrich and support the educational program of the school under the direction of the library/media specialist. A further obligation is to encourage reading for pleasure—a life long skill. To this end the Millinocket School Committee reaffirms the American Library Association's "Bill of Rights" and the National Council of Teachers of English's "Right to Read." (See attachments.)

INJC PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES
IN THE LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

*Learning resources shall support and be consistent with the general education goals of the state, the mission statement of the district, and the aims and objectives of individual schools
and specific courses.
*Learning resources shall be chosen to enrich and support the curriculum and the personal needs of users.

*Learning resources shall be chosen for their values and interests for all students of the community, including those which provide for better use of leisure time.

*Learning resources shall meet high standards of quality. Staff members involved in selection of resource materials will use the following criteria as a guide:

a. Educational significance
b. Contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interests of the students
c. Favorable reviews found in standard selection sources
d. Favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
e. Reputation and significance of the author, producer and publisher
f. Validity, up-to-dateness and appropriateness of material
g. Contribution the material makes to breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial issues
h. High degree of potential user appeal
i. High artistic quality and/or literary style
j. Quality and variety of format
k. Value commensurate with cost and/or need
l. Timeliness or permanence
m. Integrity

*Learning resources shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.

*Learning resources shall be designed to provide a background of information which will motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.

The following authorities shall be consulted in the selection of library materials:

*The Wilson Senior High School Library Catalog, the Wilson Junior High School Catalog, and the Wilson Children's Catalog;

*Reference Books for School Libraries;

*The Readers' Advisor (school library edition);

*Periodicals for school library/media programs (School Library Journal, The Book
Report, VOYA, Media & Methods);

*Recommendations from other recognized educational organizations including, but not limited to, the American Association of School Librarians, the American Library Association, and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Recommendations for purchases involve administrators, teachers, students, district personnel and community persons, as appropriate.

Gift materials shall be evaluated in the same manner as purchased materials. If the criteria is met by the materials, they will be available for general circulation.

Selection is an ongoing process which should also include removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.

Part 2

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CHALLENGED MATERIALS

Despite the care taken to select materials, it is recognized that occasional objections may be raised by community members, students or staff.

The Millinocket School Board recognizes the students' right of free [no fee] access to many different types of learning resources. It is therefore the policy of the School Board to require the materials selected for our schools be in accordance with the following:

*Books and other forms of media shall be chosen for values of interest and enlightenment of all students in the community. A book shall not be excluded solely because of race, nationality or the political or religious views of the writer or of its style and language.

*Every effort will be made to provide material that presents all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times, international, national and local; and books and other learning resources shall not be prescribed or removed from library shelves or classrooms because of partisan doctrinal approval or disapproval.

*Censorship of materials shall be challenged in order to maintain the school's responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

In the event a complaint is made, the following procedures will apply:

No duly selected materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the school except upon the recommendation of a review committee (as provided for below) with the concurrence of the Superintendent or, upon the Superintendent's recommendation, the concurrence of the School Board, or upon formal action of the School Board when a recommendation of a review committee is appealed to it.
Procedures to be observed:

a. All complaints to staff members will be reported to the building principal involved, whether received by telephone, letter, or in personal conversation.

b. The principal or his or her designated representative will contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve it informally by explaining the philosophy and goals of the school district and/or the library media center.

c. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant will be supplied a packet of materials consisting of the School Department's instructional goals and objectives, materials selection policy statement, and the procedure for handling objections. This packet will also include a standard printed form which shall be completed and returned before consideration will be given to the complaint.

d. If the formal request for reconsideration has not been received by the principal within two weeks, the issue will be considered closed. If the request is returned, the reasons for selection of the specific work shall be reestablished by the appropriate staff.

e. In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child (or children) of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

f. Upon receipt of a completed objection form, the principal in the building involved will forward the complaint to the Superintendent who will call together a committee of five or six to consider the complaint. The committee will consist of the building principal, the department head or person deemed respected in the subject under consideration, the library/media specialist, a teacher, a parent and, when appropriate, a student.

g. The committee will meet to discuss the material following the guidelines set forth in Instructions to Evaluation Committee (see attachment), and will prepare a report on the material containing its recommendations on disposition of the matter.

h. The building principal will notify the complainant of the decision and send a formal report and recommendation to the Superintendent. In answering the complainant, the principal will explain the book selection system, give the guidelines used for selection, and cite authorities used in reaching decisions. If the committee decides to keep the work that caused the complaint, the complainant will be given an explanation. If the complaint is valid, the principal
will acknowledge it and make recommended changes.

i. If the complainant is still not satisfied, he or she may ask the Superintendent to present an appeal to the School Committee which shall make a final determination of the issue. In making its determination, the School Committee may seek assistance from outside organizations such as the American Library Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Council of Teachers of English, etc.

No parent or group of parents has the right to determine the reading matter or learning resources for students other than their own children. Nevertheless, the School Committee does recognize the right of an individual parent to request that his/her child not have to read, listen to, view, or use a given resource provided a written request is made to the appropriate building principal.

Adopted: 8/4/70
Revised: 10/9/96
CITIZEN'S CHALLENGE OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA FORM

Author ___________________________ Hardcover Paperback
Title __________________________________________________________
Publisher (if known) ____________________________________________

Request initiated by_______________________________________________________
Telephone ________ Address _________________________ Town ______________

Complainant represents: _____ Him/herself
_____ Organization ____________________________________________________
_____ Other group ____________________________________________________

1. To what in the book do you object? (Please be specific, cite pages)___________
_________________________________________________________________

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading this book? _________________
_________________________________________________________________

3. For what age group would you recommend this book? _____________________

4. Is there anything good about this book? _________________________________

5. Did you read the entire book? _____ If not, what parts? _________________
_________________________________________________________________

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this book by literary critics? ______________

7. What do you believe is the theme of this book? _________________

8. What would you like the school to do about this book?
   _____ do not assign it to students
   _____ withdraw it from all patrons of the library
   _____ refer it to the Educational Media Review Committee for evaluation

9. In its place, what book of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey
   as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization? _________________

______________________________ __________________________
Signature of Complainant Date

EXHIBIT 2 for Policy IJL
ALA LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association believes that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services. It first adopted these policies as its "Library Bill of Rights" in June 1948.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

AMENDMENT I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievance.

AMENDMENT XIV

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

THE FREEDOM TO READ

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition or free expression is no longer valid, that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental promise of democracy; that the ordinary citizen, by exercising his critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow-citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression. We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.
Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untired voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collection.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range of variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

That freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free men will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority. Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until his idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation
contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process, helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one man can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author. A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free men can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression. To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous. The idea of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that each individual must be directed in making up his mind about the ideas he examines. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large. It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society each individual is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon others members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the
accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one. The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter for his purpose.

What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth.

The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to their society, requires of all bookmen the utmost of their faculties, and deserves the fullest support of all citizens.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the book. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the applications of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many person. We no not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.
SAMPLE LETTER TO COMPLAINANT

Dear ________:

We appreciate your concern over the use of _____________________ in our school district. The district has developed procedures for selecting materials, but realizes that not everyone will agree with every selection made.

To help you understand the selection process, we are sending copies of the district's:

1. Instructional goals and objectives
2. Materials Selection Policy statement
3. Procedure for Handling Objections

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the Statement of Concern About Library/Media Center Resources form and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request. If I have not heard from you within two weeks, we will assume you no longer wish to file a formal complaint.

Sincerely,

Principal
INSTRUCTIONS TO EVALUATING COMMITTEE

1. Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to learn and to read, and base your decision on these broad principles rather than on defense of individual materials. Freedom of inquiry is vital to education in a democracy.

2. Study thoroughly all materials referred to you and read available reviews. The general acceptance of the materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and local holdings in other schools.

3. Don't pull passages or parts out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions should be based on the material as a whole.

4. Your report, presenting both majority and minority opinions, if any, will be presented by the principal to the complainant at the conclusion of our discussion of the questioned material.