

# St. Augustine High School

## Library Materials Collection Development Policy

### I. PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION:

The mission of the St. Augustine High School Media Center is to provide every student access to a library that offers a collection of diverse materials to implement, enrich, and support the curriculum of St. Augustine High School and to meet the individual educational and recreational reading needs of students and staff. This library will create a safe, positive learning environment to encourage comprehensive literacy and the desire for knowledge for students and the learning community.

### II. STATEMENT OF POLICY AND PURPOSE:

St. Augustine High School provides a wide range of library materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view to meet the needs of students and teachers. School libraries are about self-selection and choice and serve as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas. The St. Augustine High School Media Center adheres to the principles of the American Library Association's The Library Bill of Rights and its role in school libraries, as quoted below:

*“The school library plays a unique role in promoting, protecting, and educating about intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library, the principles of the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights apply equally to all libraries, including school libraries. Under these principles, all students have equitable access to library facilities, resources, and instructional programs.”*

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/accessresources>

#### A. The Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. 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.

II. 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.

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

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

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

VI. 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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

*Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.*

*Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

#### **B. Objectives for the School District:**

- Instructional materials are selected by the school district to implement, enrich, and support the educational program for the student.
- Instructional materials must serve both the breadth of the curriculum and the needs and interests of individual students.
- The district is obligated to provide a wide range of abilities and to respect the diversity of many differing points of view. Principles must be placed above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality and appropriateness.

#### **C. St. Johns County School District Media Center Objectives:**

- To provide intellectual access to information through systematic learning activities which develop cognitive strategies for selecting, retrieving, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, and creating information at all age levels and in all curriculum content areas.
- To provide physical access to information through: A carefully selected and systematically organized collection of diverse learning resources, representing a wide range of subjects, levels of difficulty, communication formats, and technology delivery systems. Access to information and materials outside the library media center and the school building through such mechanisms as interlibrary loan, networking and other cooperative agreements, and online searching of databases. Providing instruction in the operation of equipment necessary to use the information in any format.
- To provide learning experiences that encourage users to become discriminating consumers and skilled creators of information through introduction to the full range of communications media and use of the new and emerging information technologies.

- To provide leadership, instruction, and consulting assistance in the use of instructional and information technology and the use of sound instructional design principles.
- To provide resources and activities that contribute to lifelong learning, while accommodating a wide range of differences in teaching and learning styles and instructional methods, interests, and capacities.
- To provide a facility that functions as the information center of the school, as a focus for integrated, interdisciplinary, intergraded, and school-wide learning activities.
- To provide resources and learning activities that represent a diversity of experiences, opinions, social and cultural perspectives, supporting the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are prerequisite to effective and responsible citizenship in a democracy.
- For further information on the role of the school library media center, please see:
- Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Center, a document prepared by the American Library Association (ALA)

### **III. SELECTION**

Selection of library media resource materials shall be consistent with the district philosophy of meeting the needs of students. Procedures shall be established to consider the unique needs of individual school programs based on professional knowledge of the curriculum and on requests from administrators and teachers. Such procedures shall also consider the needs of the individual student based on professional knowledge of children and youth and on requests by parents and students. Selection of library media resource materials shall further be guided by a knowledge of the abilities, needs, interests, motivations, cultural patterns, and maturity levels of the students.

#### **A. Responsibility for Selection**

The St. Johns County School Board has the duty to provide library materials that are appropriate for library patrons in schools. The responsibility for approving the selection and purchase of library media materials is delegated to the principal and/or his/her designee. The school administration, faculty, lay citizens, and students shall be involved in the selection process to maintain and strengthen the school's instructional program and to meet the needs of the students and community.

Materials that may be considered of questionable educational value shall be referred to the school library media committee for review. Written evidence of the committee's review and recommendation shall be filed with the principal.

#### **B. Criteria for Selection**

Materials recommended for purchase shall be considered based on overall purpose, timeliness or permanence, relevance of the subject matter, quality of the writing/production, readability and popular appeal, and authoritativeness. Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids such as the American Library Association's recommended lists, and other appropriate

professional journals and guides should be consulted in the selection of library media resource materials. When selecting materials, media specialists should make every effort to present all sides of an issue, ensuring fair and unbiased selection criteria. Actual examination of materials is desirable to determine their usefulness to students. A comparison of the evaluations of several reviews is recommended to give insight into the specific qualities of materials being considered. Examination of all new print and non-print materials shall be conducted by the school media staff prior to student use.

### **C. Educational Library Materials Selection Policy:**

“Students shall have access to sufficient and appropriate educational media resources. The purpose of these materials is to implement, enrich, and support the educational program of the school. The collection of library materials shall be assembled to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal, and the representation of different points of view. Materials will be selected to meet the following objectives:

- To enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interest, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
- To stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literacy appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
- To provide a background of information enabling students to make intelligent judgements in their daily life.
- To represent the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to the American heritage.

It is a goal of the District to provide a comprehensive collection appropriate for students which places principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality. The Superintendent shall adopt procedures to implement this Rule.”

*From School Board Rule 4.13, STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41, F.S. LAWS IMPLEMENTED: 1006.28; 1006.34(2)(b), F.S. HISTORY: Adopted: 01/11/05, Revision Date(s): 01/11/0*

Additionally, to assure that the St. Augustine High School library program is an integral part of the educational program of the school, the following selection objectives are adopted:

- To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum and the personal reading needs of the users, taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities and learning styles.
- To provide materials on opposing sides of issues so that users may develop the practical skills of analysis and critical thinking.
- To provide materials which realistically represent our pluralistic society and reflect on the contributions made by these groups and individuals.
- 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 library collection appropriate for the user.

- To provide materials that support the needs of our school's unique programs of choice and academies.

Library materials are selected to support the curriculum of the school and the extended learning and recreational needs of the students. Print and non-print materials fill identified needs in the library media collection and foster reading skills, literature appreciation, and support the instructional program. Staff involved in selection of library and resource materials for the St. Augustine High School Media Center shall also use the following criteria as a guide for collection development:

- Contribute to the objectives of the instructional program and a balanced collection
- The influential impact the subject matter makes to the curriculum and learning community
- Favorable reviews found in standard selection sources, favorable recommendations based on previews of materials by professional personnel
- Reputation and significance of the author, producer, and publisher
- Validity, currency, and appropriateness - Materials are relevant to today's world and student demographic
- Resources represent artistic, historic, and literary qualities
- Materials represent differing viewpoints of controversial issues so that users have the freedom to engage in critical analysis of such issues, to explore their own beliefs, and behaviors, and to make intelligent judgements in their everyday lives.
- Reflect problems, aspirations, attitudes and ideals of a diverse society
- Contribute to the objectives of St. Augustine High School's unique academic programs: the Cambridge AICE program, the Aerospace Academy, SJCCA St. Johns County Center for the Arts, JROTC, Academy of Future Teachers, Academy of Law and Homeland Security
- Be appropriate to the level of the St. Augustine High School student population
- Demand, high degree of potential user appeal and interest
- Provide students with access to current and emerging digital platforms. Ensure access to reputable academic databases for research.

#### **D. Procedures and Tools for Selection:**

Reliable, authoritative, approved bibliographies, professional publications, professional reviews, and examination of materials shall be used in the selection process. In selecting materials for school library programs, the certified media specialist will evaluate the existing collection, assess curricular needs, examine materials and consult reputable, professionally prepared selection resources. Additionally, recommendations for acquisition will be solicited from faculty and students. Gift materials should be judged by the criteria listed in the preceding section and should be accepted or rejected based on those criteria. Selection is an ongoing process which includes the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials still of educational value.

Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and other appropriate professional journals and guides should be consulted in the selection of library media resource materials. When selecting materials, media specialists should make every effort to present all sides of an issue, ensuring fair and unbiased selection criteria. Actual examination of materials is desirable

to determine their usefulness to students. A comparison of the evaluations of several reviews is recommended to give insight into the specific qualities of materials being considered. Examination of all new print and non-print materials shall be conducted by the school media staff prior to student use. Materials that may be considered of questionable educational value shall be referred to the reconsideration committee for review.

Some tools used in selection at St. Augustine High School:

- Follett Title wave database
- School Library Journal
- ALA, YALSA, AASL
- FAME
- Horn Book
- Booklinks
- Common Sense Media
- Publishers Weekly
- Booklist
- Kirkus
- Junior Library Guild

Furthermore, St. Augustine High School maintains subscriptions with reputable, academic databases, including Gale and JSTOR. The Florida Electronic Library is provided by the Florida Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services.

#### **E. Weeding**

Weeding is essential to maintain a relevant and up-to-date collection. The school's library staff shall periodically review the collection to determine which materials should be removed or replaced. Weeding is defined as the practice of discarding excess copies, rarely used books, and materials with incorrect information or no longer relevant to the curriculum or needs of students. Weeding should not be used as a means for withdrawing materials which are of a controversial nature or needing re-evaluation. The county adopted policy for handling the re-evaluation of materials shall be followed for controversial material. SAHS library staff shall weed their collection every year to maintain materials that are still useful and timely.

Books should be considered for removal if any of the following conditions apply:

- The book is in poor physical condition. However, literary quality and availability of a replacement should be considered
- The book or series has been superseded by books containing more current information.
- Unessential or unneeded duplicate volumes
- The book contains subject matter no longer needed to support the curriculum.
- The book contains wrong, inaccurate, or dated information.
- The book is irrelevant to the needs and interests of the educational community.
- The book receives little use according to circulation statistics

#### **F. Inventory of Library Collection**

The school's library media professional is responsible to maintain a regular inventory of materials and equipment. A formal inventory shall be conducted at least every year to assess the library collection and help with selection and acquisition of materials and equipment.

#### **IV. PARENTAL RESTRICTION OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ACCESS**

The District recognizes the right of parents to restrict their children's access to materials they deem inappropriate. However, no parent has the right to make that decision on behalf of other students. A parent desiring to restrict their own child's access to specific library books or materials shall first advise the child of the restriction. Then the parent may submit the request in writing, using the "Individualized School Access Library Plan" form, to the library professional at the school the child is attending. This form is available at the SAHS Media Center and website.

#### **V. RECONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY MATERIALS**

The St. Johns County School District takes very seriously all concerns expressed by parents, students and community members. Every effort will be made to respond as quickly as possible to ensure that concerns are given careful consideration. A parent or community member that wants to file a formal objection will fill out a Request for Reconsideration form (available at the SAHS Media Center, by request, or from the district website). The complainant will have to note whether the objection is for instructional materials, or non-instructional school library materials. For non-instructional, school library materials, the complainant will be contacted and the reconsideration procedure will be explained. The school will form a Reconsideration Committee to read and evaluate the material. All parties involved will read the material being reconsidered. The challenged material will be kept in circulation during the challenge period.

The reconsideration committee shall take the following steps:

1. Read or view the challenged material in its entirety.
2. Review the selection policy and the selection process for the challenged material.
3. Check reviews and recommendations to see what experts say about the material.
4. Meet to discuss the challenge.
5. Make a recommendation to the principal and the district on retention, removal or replacement.
6. The outcome of the challenge will be communicated directly to the patron making the challenge. All communications will be made in writing.