



Grand Haven  
Area Public Schools

# Material Reconsideration Guide

Hello Parent, Guardian, Community Member,

Please review the GHAPS library mission statement, selection process, and the text in this document before completing the School Materials Reconsideration Form. This is consistent with Board Policy 9130. The GHAPS Policy for Selecting Controversial Materials, ALA Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to Read Statements are in the addendum for optional reading. The Materials Reconsideration Committee will be asked to read these documents.

## **GHAPS Library Mission**

The mission of the school library is to build a community of independent life-long readers and learners by fostering the spirit of curiosity and choice, by teaching the skills to think critically and creatively, and by providing access to a well-managed, high-quality, diverse collection of resources that meet academic and personal needs.

## **GHAPS Selection Objectives**

Objectives are, of necessity, broad and should relate to the mission of the school and its instructional program. Instructional and library materials are selected by the school district to implement, enrich, and support the educational program and personal interests of each student.

### **GHAPS School Library Selection Objectives**

- To provide faculty and students with age-appropriate materials that enrich and support the curriculum and meet the needs of the students and faculty served
- To provide students with a wide range of educational materials on all levels of difficulty and in a variety of formats, with diversity of appeal, allowing for the presentation of many different points of view
- To select materials that present various sides of controversial issues, giving students an opportunity to develop analytical skills resulting in informed decisions
- To select materials in all formats, including accurate, up-to-date, high quality, varied literature to develop and strengthen a love of reading

## **GHAPS School Library Responsibility for Selection**

Although the Board of Education is legally responsible for the resources used in a school, it delegates the selection of the library's resources to its professional school library personnel. The Board of Education directs the library professional, as part of their professional duties, to seek recommendations, stay current with trends in the wider library/education community, and work collaboratively with others in the school community during the selection process. Teachers, students, administrators, and others participate by making recommendations; the final responsibility for the selection decisions rests with the school library professional

## **GHAPS School Library Selection Criteria**

School library media specialists select materials for the library using a combination of criteria in order to establish a well-rounded, diverse collection. Maintaining a balanced collection requires an ongoing process of evaluation, acquisition, and weeding. Consideration and reconsideration is a part of that ongoing process.

### **Selection Criteria**

Materials are selected to:

- Support and enrich the curriculum and/or students' personal interests and learning
- Meet high standards in literary, artistic, and aesthetic quality; technical aspects; and physical format
- Fill gaps in the collection (topics or authors) to provide a more balanced and complete collection
- Be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, ability level, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development of the students for whom the materials are selected
- Incorporate accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources
- Seek materials with favorable reviews in standard reviewing sources and/or favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel
- Exhibit a high degree of potential user appeal and interest
- Represent differing viewpoints on controversial issues
- Provide a greater representation and broader perspectives by including materials by authors and illustrators of all cultures
- Include a variety of resources in physical and virtual formats including print and non-print such as electronic and multimedia, including subscription databases and other online products, e-books, educational games, and other forms of emerging technologies
- Demonstrate physical format, appearance, and durability suitable to their intended use
- Balance cost with need

## **Recommended School Library Reviewing Sources**

Not all items purchased have a review, nor does a review determine the acquisition of an item.

- Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) Notable Children's Books
- Booklist
- School Library Journal
- We Need Diverse Books website
- Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) Best Books for Young Adults
- Common Sense Media
- Kirkus Reviews

## **GHAPS Acquisitions Procedures in School Libraries**

The school librarian is responsible for creating a collection to support instruction, literacy, and students' recreational reading. The library professional will seek input from teachers, other professional staff, and students. School librarians are also responsible for weeding or de-selecting collection materials following policy guidelines as well as making a decision as to whether gift items will be accepted.

### **GHAPS School Library Acquisitions Procedures**

- In selecting learning resources, professional personnel will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids to selection, and other appropriate sources. The actual resource will be examined whenever possible.
- Gift materials shall be judged by the selection criteria and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.
- Selection is an ongoing process that should include removing materials that are no longer used or needed, adding materials, and replacing lost and worn materials that still have educational value.

# GHAPS Procedures for Collection Maintenance in School Libraries

Evaluation of the collection should be an ongoing process by the library media specialists. This is necessary to keep the collection relevant to the changing needs of curriculum and personal interests of students. Evaluation should include the removal of materials no longer relevant or appropriate. The underlying principle of weeding is quality, not quantity. With a proper balance of planning, weeding, and purchasing, the collection should meet high standards and meet the needs of the learning community.

The following questions can be used as a guide for making removal or discontinuance decisions:

- Is the content outdated?
- Has the book circulated in the last few years?
- Are the materials age-appropriate for the school community?
- Does the book include information that is biased, racist, or sexist, or otherwise discriminatory towards any group of people?
- Is the book relevant to the needs and interests of students and staff?
- Has a subsequent edition of the book been added? Or is there a better book that should be obtained instead?
- Are there multiple copies of the book available and do they circulate?
- Are the materials available in an online database?
- Is the book physically damaged beyond repair?

Once materials are properly weeded from the system, the barcode should be removed and any mention of the district and the school should be redacted. Materials may be transferred to a different school in the district if needed, may be given to students or staff members, may be donated, or discarded properly, as deemed appropriate by the certified school librarian.

# GHAPS Procedures for Handling Formal Complaints

The following procedures should be followed if, after discussing the questioned material informally with appropriate school officials, no resolution is made.

1. The complaint should be referred and submitted to the principal of the school(s) in which the material is available to its students. The complaint can only be filed by a current GHAPS staff member, parent/guardian, or student (hereby referred to as “a member of the GHAPS community” or “complainant”).
2. A concerned member of the GHAPS community who is dissatisfied with earlier informal discussions will be offered a packet of materials that includes the library’s mission statement, selection policy, the Materials Reconsideration Form (Appendix A), and the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights (Appendix B).
3. The complainant is required to complete and submit the Materials Reconsideration Form (Appendix A) to the principal, who will notify the superintendent, the curriculum director, building media specialist, and the library department chair. A complainant may only submit one reconsideration form for one book at a time.
4. The material in question will remain on library shelves and in circulation until a formal decision is made.
5. The committee will be appointed and consist of the curriculum director, at least one teacher representing grade level and content area, a school librarian, the library department chair, at least one parent/guardian, and a student when appropriate. The complainant may not be on the committee but they may choose a GHAPS parent/guardian to sit on the committee. It is suggested that a Board of Education trustee sit on the committee. There must be an odd number of committee members.
6. The district will provide copies of the questioned material for the committee.
7. The committee will be asked to review the mission, selection criteria, Library Bills of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, the completed reconsideration form, the reviews, awards and honors if they exist. The committee will be asked to be neutral and set aside bias on controversial issues to objectively review the material. The committee will be asked to evaluate values, faults and form an opinion based on the material as a whole, not isolated passages.
8. The district goal is to schedule an initial meeting with the Material Reconsideration Committee within 10 school days of the submitted reconsideration form.

9. The committee should follow the procedures listed below:

- At the initial meeting, the committee will review Materials Reconsideration Committee guidelines and procedures.
- A member of the committee will keep minutes.
- All committee members will fully review the resource (read or view the entire work) before voting.
- The committee reserves the right to use outside expertise if necessary to help in its decision-making process.
- The committee will only deliberate in committee meetings. During subsequent meetings, the committee will make its recommendation determined by the simple majority to retain, move the materials to a different level, or remove the material. This will be a vote tallied by the superintendent with committee members remaining anonymous and having their vote designated as Committee Member A, B, and so on. The aggregate tally will be shared. The committee's written recommendation (including a minority report if needed) shall be presented to the complainant, the superintendent of schools, and the Board of Education within five school days after the decision is made.
- The committee will make a recommendation to the superintendent whose decision will be final. The superintendent will notify the complainant and the Board of Education of the decision within 30 school days.
- Decisions on reconsidered materials will stand for five years before new requests for reconsiderations of those items will be entertained.

GHAPS School Materials Reconsideration Form is below.

[Materials Reconsideration Appendix](#)



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# GHAPS School Materials Reconsideration Form

The Board of Education of Grand Haven Area Public Schools has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library/educational resources to the school library professional staff/curriculum committee, and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of school or library resources, please return the completed form to the Director of Instructional Services. If you need more space for your answers, you may attach additional pages as necessary.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent yourself? \_\_\_\_\_ Or an organization? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

1. Title of Challenged Material: \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

2. Is the resource part of the curriculum, library collection, or other? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What brought this resource to your attention?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you read the entire resource? If not, what sections did you read? Be specific.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What concerns you about the resource? (Please be specific, cite page numbers).

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6. What value is there in this work?

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7. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this work?

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8. For what age group would you recommend this work? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you aware of the judgment of this work by critics? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

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13. In its place, what work of equal value would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of a society or set of values?

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Signature of the complainant

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Date