

**BABCOCK NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL, INC.
POLICY ON INSTRUCTIONAL AND
READING MATERIALS
ADOPTED AND EFFECTIVE 7-18-23**

It is the intent of the Board of Directors (“Board”) of Babcock Neighborhood School, Inc. (the “School”) to provide a wide range of materials, in print, electronic, and digital format, on all levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and the representation of different points of view, and age-appropriate content. All instructional and reading materials should be adopted and may be challenged using the procedures described herein.

A. Adoption of Materials

The Board must adopt all instructional and reading materials that are part of required instruction, on a required reading list, or kept within the library at a public meeting in a compliance with Florida’s Sunshine Law. The selection, approval, adoption, or purchase of materials must be a separate line item on the agenda and may not be part of the consent agenda. At least twenty (20) calendar days before the Board votes on the adoption of any instructional and reading materials, members of the public must be provided the opportunity to inspect all such materials, excluding teacher editions. Parents will be given the opportunity to object to the adoption of any instructional or reading materials utilizing the procedures set forth in Section G of this policy.

The Board may appoint the School’s Academic Committee to review and make recommendations to the Board for adoption of materials. Meetings of the Academic Committee convened for the purpose of ranking, eliminating, or selecting instructional materials for recommendation to the Board shall be open to the public, noticed at least seven days in advance, allow for public comment, and minutes must be taken.

In lieu of the above requirements, the Board may adopt any instructional and reading materials that have been adopted by the School Board of Charlotte County.

B. Guidelines for Selection of Materials

Instructional and reading materials should be selected based on the criteria set forth in this policy. Materials recommended by each reviewer shall be, to the satisfaction of each reviewer, accurate, objective, balanced, noninflammatory, current, free of material that is inappropriate or prohibited under Section 847.012, Florida Statutes, and suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material presented. In selecting materials for recommendation, reviewers shall follow all requirements of Florida law, including the considerations set forth in Sections 1006.31(2), 1006.40(3)(d), and 1003.42(3), Florida Statutes, as well as the considerations set forth below:

1. The age of the students who normally could be expected to have access to the material and whether the material is developmentally appropriate.
2. The educational purpose to be served by the material. Priority shall be given to the selection of materials that align with the state standards.

3. The degree to which the material would be supplemented and explained by mature classroom instruction as part of a normal classroom instructional program.
4. The consideration of the broad racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural diversity of the students.
5. The academic needs of students and faculty, including the reviewer's knowledge of the state standards, curriculum, and the existing collection.
6. Reader interest in the material.
7. Whether the material contains inappropriate content or content that is otherwise not suitable for the age group of the students that would have access or exposure to the material.
8. If the material contains controversial or sensitive subject matter, whether there is a reasonable alternative that can confer upon students the same educational benefit in a more age-appropriate or suitable manner.
9. Format and price.

In compliance with Section 1003.42(3), Florida Statutes, all instructional and reading materials must be consistent with the following principles of individual freedom:

1. No person is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex.
2. No race is inherently superior to another race.
3. No person should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, or sex.
4. Meritocracy or traits such as a hard work ethic are not racist but fundamental to the right to pursue happiness and be rewarded for industry.
5. A person, by virtue of his or her race or sex, does not bear responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.
6. A person should not be instructed that he or she must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress for actions, in which he or she played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.

C. Donation of Materials

The School may accept donations of instructional and reading materials from members of the community with the understanding that such materials must comply with the selection criteria established in this policy.

D. Classroom Collections

If a teacher has a classroom collection of books and materials, the teacher is responsible for cataloguing all books and materials that are available to students through the collection and providing this information to the Principal. The list of books and materials must be kept up-to-date. Any books or materials available to students through a classroom collection must adhere to the considerations set forth in Section B of this policy and are subject to being challenged by parents under Section G of this policy. The Principal also reserves the right to require the removal of any book or material from a teacher's classroom collection.

E. Required Information for Website

For grades K-5, the school must post on its website a searchable list of all materials maintained in the media center and found on any required school or grade-level reading list. This includes any books that are part of a teacher’s classroom library. The searchable list must include the following information:

1. The title and author for books and ebooks;
2. The name or title for periodicals and videos; and
3. The title for any other material.

F. Removal or Discontinuance of Certain Materials

The School shall regularly discontinue or remove instructional and reading materials based on physical condition, rate of recent circulation, alignment to state academic standards and relevancy to curriculum, out-of-date content, or where removal is otherwise required by this policy or the law.

G. Objections to Materials

The Board hereby establishes the Materials Review Committee, which shall review and consider challenges to any instructional and reading materials. The Materials Review Committee must include at least (i) one parent of a student attending the School; (ii) one teacher (preferably with expertise in the field or subject matter of the challenged material); and (iii) the Principal.

The Materials Review Committee shall meet as often as needed to review challenges to any instructional or reading materials properly made pursuant to this policy. Meetings of the Materials Review Committee shall be open to the public, noticed at least seven days in advance, allow for public comment, and minutes must be taken. Meetings of the Materials Review Committee may be conducted in-person or via communications media technology. The Principal shall serve as the Chair of the Materials Review Committee. A majority of the full membership of the Materials Review Committee must be present in-person or via communications media technology to establish a quorum.

Any parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled at the school who finds any instructional or reading material to be objectionable and has read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety may ask the Materials Review Committee for review. To initiate the process, the parent or guardian must submit to the Principal the Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form, attached hereto as Exhibit “A.” Upon receipt, the Principal shall forward the form to the various members of the Materials Review Committee and convene a meeting of the Materials Review Committee within 30 days. Prior to the meeting, the Principal shall provide the members with a copy of the challenged material for review. Until such time as the Materials Review Committee meets, the challenged material will be removed from the classroom or library.

The Materials Review Committee will meet to objectively determine whether the challenged material aligns with the values and considerations set forth in Florida law and this policy. In making this determination, the Materials Review Committee should carefully review the challenged material and may review any other documents related to the request. The

Materials Review Committee will then vote by majority on whether the challenged material should be removed and prohibited from further use at the school or placed back into use. In the event of a tie vote, the decision of the Principal shall be determinative.

The parent who made the challenge or the Principal may appeal the decision to the Board in writing by submitting an explanation for the basis of the appeal that is limited to one page along with the original Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials form. Appeals to the Board must be submitted at least 10 days following the decision of the Materials Review Committee. The appeal may be submitted to the Board Chair or the Parent Representative of the Board. The Board may choose whether or not to hear any appeal by a majority vote at any meeting. If the Board votes not to hear the appeal, the decision of the Materials Review Committee shall be final. If the Board does choose to hear the appeal, the Board must follow the same procedures for reviewing the challenged material as apply to the Materials Review Committee and the Board's decision will be final.

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Board Certificate**

I hereby certify that the foregoing Policy was adopted by a majority vote of a quorum of the Governing Board of Directors at a duly noticed meeting held on July 18th, 2023. This Policy is intended to supersede and replace any prior policies regarding the same subject matter.

Robert Kenny
Robert Kenny (Jul 26, 2023 14:36 EDT)
Robert Kenny, Board Chair
Jul 26, 2023
Date

Attest:

Natalie Bolton
Natalie Bolton (Jul 26, 2023 20:39 CDT)
Natalie Bolton, Board Secretary

Jul 26, 2023
Date

3. How was this material brought to your attention?

4. What negative impact do you believe would result from the reading, viewing, or listening of this material?

5. What age group might be more suitable of this material? _____

6. In its place, what material of equal value do you recommend that would provide adequate information on this subject?

Signature

Date