

ASPEN ACADEMY

Adopted: October 16, 2012

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617 SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

I. PURPOSE

The Mission Statement of Aspen Academy calls for providing students with a well-rounded, Core Knowledge based education which meets the intellectual, creative and social needs of each child. Our Vision of the execution of this Mission Statement requires that we prepare our students for future educational opportunities and life in a global society by creating an academically rigorous, literature-rich environment where class sizes are small and a strong sense of community is built and valued. To fulfill the goals set forth in the Mission and Vision, Aspen Academy, will aim to implement, enrich and support the selected educational program. Instructional materials will be selected and differentiated to best provide a rich learning environment for students. Every student shall have an equal opportunity to learn in an environment that promotes literature and has available the learning resources with which to make this possible.

It is therefore the philosophy of Aspen Academy to create an educational environment that promotes lifelong learning, reading and research skills through exposure to a variety of both print and non-print materials.

II. OBJECTIVES OF SELECTION

The primary objective of Aspen Academy is to implement, enrich and support the educational programs of the school. In order to ensure that all learning resources selected are an integral part of the educational program of the school, the following objectives are held to be true:

- A. To provide resources, both print and non-print, that will enrich and support the curriculum and the personal needs of users while taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and other needs.
- B. To provide resources that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards for both students and teachers.
- C. To provide a background of information and skills which will enhance their critical thinking skills and enable the students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
- D. To provide resources which reflect the varied ideas and beliefs of social, religious, political, historical and ethnic groups and their contributions to the American and World heritage and culture, thereby enabling students to develop an intellectual understanding.

- E. To place principle above personal opinion, and reason above prejudice in the selection of quality and educational materials in order to ensure a comprehensive collection appropriate for all users.

III. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The Aspen Academy School Board supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States as they are expressed in official statements of professional associations. The following documents may be referenced as a part of this policy: Library Bill of Rights (American Library Association), Freedom to Read Statement (American Library Association), Freedom to View (American Library Association), Statement on Intellectual Freedom (Associate for Educational Communications and Technology) and A Policy on the Freedom to Teach, to Learn and to Express Ideas in the Public Schools (Minnesota Board of Education).

IV. COPYRIGHT LAW

Aspen Academy recognizes the importance and necessity of the copyright law. The school district will follow all guidelines and regulations outlined in the copyright law.

V. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESOURCES

The responsibility for all learning resources is legally vested in the Aspen Academy School Board which delegates to the Director or designee the responsibility to develop final recommendations for acquisitions. Moreover, the actual selection is left to those whose responsibility it is to know the curriculum and the students of the school where they work and to know the Mission and Vision and policies of the school district.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF COVERED RESOURCES

For the purpose of this policy, the term “learning resources” includes but is not limited to a) printed, both text and graphic and b) non-print and audio visual materials, whether considered text materials or media materials. The term “text materials” includes textbooks and other print and non-print materials provided for students’ or teachers’ use in and out of the classroom setting. The term “media” includes all instructional materials in resource centers and classrooms which are not text materials. These collections can contain, but are not limited to books, periodicals, pamphlets, filmstrips, videos, DVDs, audio tapes, globes, maps, computer software and Internet resources along with any other print and non-print materials deemed necessary and useful through the selection process.

VII. PROCESS OF SELECTION

The responsibility for the selection of Aspen Academy learning resources may be delegated to a professional noted by the Director. Teachers, consultants, and students are called upon for their ideas regarding specific learning resources needed in a field of specialization or to add depth to their existing or new curriculum. In selecting learning resources for the school, for classroom’s needs and for use by students, the school will evaluate the learning resource against

reputable sources that contain well-written recommendations for both older and newer books, assess the curricula needs, review solicited recommendations made by administrators, teachers, parents, students and other school district personnel and community members. The school will consult reputable professionally prepared selection aids and examine the materials when applicable. The final selection of all resources is the responsibility of the Director and/or designee.

VIII. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Educational suitability and quality are the major criteria for the selection of educational resources. Staff who are selecting learning resources should also consider the following criteria:

- A. Learning Resources selected support and are consistent with the general educational goals and objectives of Aspen Academy, particularly those that are required by the Core Knowledge scope and sequence.
- B. Resources selected support and enrich the school curriculum and meet the personal needs and interests of students.
- C. Resources selected address the diverse needs of students taking into consideration ability level and learning styles.
- D. Resources selected provide a background of information which will motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges in preparation for the time when they will be required to act upon these thoughts as adult citizens in our society and to make intelligent, wise decisions about their everyday lives, both now and in the future.
- E. Resources selected provide information on the differing sides of issues so that the users of the resources may develop the practice of critical analysis and thought processes.
- F. Resources selected meet the needs of the atypical student as well as the average student's needs.
- G. Resources selected are done so based on their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses and are judged as a whole in the light of their quality and educational value.
- H. Resources are selected for their superior format, durability and quality construction.

All learning resources, be they print or non-print, that are finally purchased should meet or exceed the above criteria.

IX. ACQUISITION

Learning resources can then be purchased using approved administrative procedures. The learning resources shall then be reviewed to make sure that they fulfill the criteria stated in Section VIII or they shall be returned.

It should be understood that selection is an ongoing process that should include the removal of both print and non-print resources as deemed necessary during the time of inventory. Removal of these materials shall be done following the procedures outlined in Policy 802.

X. GIFT POLICY

Gifts and donations to the school are encouraged. However, the gifts and donations must meet the same criteria that are applied to the selection of other resources as well as Aspen Academy's Policy 706 on Donations.

XI. RE-EVALUATION PROCEDURES APPLY TO ALL

Any parent or employee of the school district may raise an objection to the appropriateness or acceptability to any learning resources used in the district's educational program. This policy applies to any and all requests for the reevaluation of learning resources.

XII. PROCEDURE FOR CHALLENGE and RE-EVALUATION OF RESOURCES

In the event that a learning resource of Aspen Academy is challenged, the following procedures shall be followed:

- (1) Any person who objects to any learning resource held by the school district shall have his or her objection directed to the Curriculum Coordinator or other person designated by the Director.
- (2) Within three (3) regular school days of receiving the objection, the Curriculum Coordinator shall contact the complainant and will then provide him or her with a copy of this policy and, if desired, will at that time arrange a preliminary meeting with him or her.
- (3) At that preliminary meeting, if requested, the Curriculum Coordinator shall explain a) the selection criteria b) the qualifications of the person who has selected the learning resource in question c) the rationale for that particular learning resource including its intended educational use d) that Core Knowledge materials or other learning resources required by our charter cannot be challenged but that the parent has the right, by law, to provide alternate comparable content e) any additional information regarding the learning resource that is pertinent and f) the formal complaint process.
- (4) The Curriculum Coordinator will also make note of the person's specific concerns.
- (5) The complainant will then be asked whether he or she wishes to file a formal complaint and if so will be asked to file his or her objection in written form. This form will be entitled ***Request for the Re-evaluation of Learning Resources***. The complainant will be given five regular (5) school days within which to return the form to the appropriate contact person. A complainant who does not complete and return the form within the required time frame receives no further action.
- (6) A written record of the preliminary meeting will be documented. This record will contain the nature of the objection, the name of the objector, the title of the learning resource, a basic explanation of the complainant's objections and a complete synopsis of the events that have occurred regarding the objection.
- (7) Upon receipt of the completed form, the Curriculum Coordinator shall request a review of the challenged learning resource by the Learning Resources Committee.
- (8) The Learning Resources Committee will hold a closed preliminary meeting within two (2) weeks of receipt of the completed form and will hold an open hearing within four (4) weeks of the preliminary meeting. Until a decision has been made at the open hearing, there shall be no restriction on the learning resource's use.

XIII. THE LEARNING RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The committee for the reevaluation of resources, called the Learning Resources Committee, will be made up by the school and community yearly, prior to September 1, and consist of 3 members. These members will be:

- A. An Aspen Teacher
- B. The Chair of the Program Services School Board Committee
- C. One parent (who did not make the complaint)

Should there be a member of the committee, who for reasons beyond their control cannot complete their appointment; an alternate will be appointed by the committee.

XIV. LEARNING RESOURCES COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

The objective of the Learning Resources Committee is to hold a re-evaluation meeting to discuss the learning resource, hear testimony and reach a decision regarding the learning resource. These are the steps that the Learning Resource Committee must follow after receiving the completed form:

- (1) A copy of the completed form, *Request for Re-evaluation of Learning Resources* as filled out by the complainant will be distributed to each member of the committee.
- (2) Each member of the committee will also receive the evaluation checklist for the questioned resource.
- (3) There will be arrangements made for the reading/viewing/listening to the learning resource in question by the committee.
- (4) The learning resource will be obtained and given to each committee member at least five (5) regular school days prior to the meeting of the Learning Resources Committee.
- (5) The Learning Resources Committee will then schedule a preliminary meeting to review the materials gathered that pertain to the learning resource and to set a date for an open hearing about the learning resource. The open hearing will be publicly held and announced according to open meeting law.
- (6) At the open hearing, the committee shall invite people to give testimony.
- (7) The committee will examine the learning resource. The committee will weigh values and faults and form opinions on the learning resource as a whole, rather than on any separate passages or sections taken out of context. The committee will examine the learning resource in relationship to the school board's selection policy, and will discuss the resource at the open hearing.
- (8) If it is deemed necessary by the committee, a second open meeting can be set in order to more fully hear testimony. The second meeting must also be an open forum that will be publicly held and announced.
- (9) The committee will then make a decision on the learning resource based on the above criteria and actions. The final decision will be made through a vote.
- (10) After informing the complainant of the decision, the Curriculum Coordinator will prepare a written report stating the actions. The written report, signed by all the members of the committee, accompanied by all the learning resources that were used during the proceedings and a dissenting report, if one is written, shall be submitted to the

Director and School Board and shall be communicated to all appropriate employees.
This shall be the official written record of the case.

The decision reached by the Learning Resources Committee shall be binding.