

DATE:	April 11, 2022
SUBJECT:	Statewide Standards/Policy Regarding Library Content
CATEGORY:	Governance
NEXT STEPS:	Share with the board of trustees/governing board

On November 10, 2021, Governor Greg Abbott directed the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to address statewide standards to prevent the presence of obscene content in Texas public school libraries. Additionally, local educational agencies (LEAs) experiencing challenges regarding library materials have reached out to TEA for guidance. In response, TEA is providing a model local board policy to assist LEAs. The model local policy is available on this [Recommended Policies](#) page. It is recommended that boards of trustees of independent school districts and governing boards of charter schools review and consider if an adjustment to current policy is necessary.

While most school systems have a local policy (see EF Local) to review instructional resources after a parent complaint is received, school libraries are offered as places for voluntary inquiry. While instructional materials and library materials are both considered instructional resources, they are not the same. Therefore, library materials should be treated differently from instructional materials used in classroom instruction. TEA's model policy provides such a distinction by solely addressing the review, selection, and approval of library materials, including procedures to ensure transparency and clear processes for parents to challenge those chosen materials in a more comprehensive manner.

The TEA recognizes that LEAs have significant local control over the selection of instructional resources and that policy development is a cooperative effort between the administration and the board within roles defined by law. For school districts, [Texas Education Code, Section 11.201\(d\)\(7\)](#), specifically charges the superintendent with "preparing recommendations for policies to be adopted by the board of trustees and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies."

As questions continue to emerge concerning school library collections, the TEA encourages LEAs to carefully review their current selection procedures for library materials, gathering input of LEA staff, legal counsel, as well as participation from the community, particularly parents—overall, ensuring alignment between local values and state statute. To that end, this model policy will assist in those efforts.

If you have questions related to this correspondence, please contact a member of the TEA governance team at (512) 936-1533 or via e-mail at schoolgovernance@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Jeff Cottrill
Deputy Commissioner of Governance & Accountability