

Category:	Procedure:	
<b>Instructional Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>Selection of Instructional Materials other than Textbooks</b>	
Descriptor Code:	Issued Date:	Revised Date:
<b>AP-I-211</b>	<b>August 2013</b>	<b>April 2025</b>

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**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Teachers are held accountable for implementing state-approved high-quality instructional materials as the core to the instructional content as outlined in T.C.A. § 49-6-2206. Teachers, school administrators, and instructional supervisors/specialists will collaborate to select appropriate high-quality instructional materials for content areas in which high-quality instructional materials are not outlined by the Tennessee Department of Education. Such materials could include (but are not limited to) books, magazines, newspapers, journals, and video, audio, digital, and web resources.

Decisions around additional instructional materials are most effectively made at the point closest to their impact, i.e. at the school, classroom, or individual student level. Recognizing it is not feasible nor desirable at the district level to develop an exhaustive list of approved resources for every school need, teachers, instructional supervisors/specialists, and administrators will be expected to use professional judgment as well as established review criteria when selecting instructional materials for each usage case. It is expected that educators consult with content area support staff as needed during the planning process.

**MATERIALS USAGE CASES**

Instructional materials, in addition to the HQIM in the adopted curriculum, may be used in a variety of ways that are suitable for and consistent with the educational mission of the school. The usage case should be considered when selecting instructional materials, as some materials are more suitable for some purposes than others.

- **Supplements for direct instruction:** Educators may select additional high-quality materials to support their adopted curriculum when a need for supplementation is revealed during the course of instruction and formative assessment. These decisions should be driven by the core actions in the Instructional Practice Guide for the content area. Any supplemental texts should serve to support students in accessing the rigorous grade-level texts and tasks of their core instructional content. In content areas where high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) are in use through state adopted materials, supplemental materials may not replace the HQIM; instead, the supplemental materials may be utilized in addition to the HQIM.
- **Audiovisual works:** Any audiovisual content selected to supplement classroom instruction should be reviewed using the same criteria and process as textual content. Audiovisual materials will only be shown in teacher-guided activities as part of regular instruction, in ways allowed under U.S. copyright law, as outlined in Knox County Schools Administrative Procedure AP-I-231 “Use of Copyrighted Materials in Educational Settings.”
- **Independent choice reading:** The school day may include a wide variety of times that are not spent in direct instruction, including early completion of assigned tasks, class or activity transitions, before or

1 after school periods, etc. Educators may promote independent choice reading during any time that is  
2 not dedicated to direct instruction, including materials that are made available to students for their  
3 individual perusal and selection, rather than directly assigned. Materials made available for  
4 independent choice reading through school library or classroom library collections must comply with  
5 the Age Appropriate Materials Act, T.C.A. § 49-6-3803, with additional guidance outlined in Knox  
6 County Schools Administrative Procedure AP-I-241 "School Library Collection Development."

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- 8 • Special events, summer reading, and school-wide reading lists: Teacher and school administrators  
9 who approve special events, summer reading lists, and/or school-wide reading assignments (i.e.  
10 school-wide, SLC, or advisory book study) should ensure that any potentially sensitive instructional  
11 materials will be reviewed through the IMA process.

## 12 **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ASSESSMENT**

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15 The Instructional Materials Assessment (IMA) process will use the criteria listed below, as well as the  
16 attached form and protocol, to review and select materials that will be assigned to students. For instructional  
17 materials that include potentially sensitive content, the IMA documentation must be reviewed and approved  
18 by the school principal or his/her designee prior to their assignment. The school principal will be responsible  
19 and accountable for ensuring that the IMA process is consistently utilized to assess potentially sensitive  
20 content.

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22 Teachers will read any written materials and/or carefully preview any non-written materials prior to their  
23 assignment. Teachers should use the following criteria along with professional judgment when reviewing  
24 instructional materials for classroom use. These criteria are not intended to be used as a checklist; depending  
25 on the specifics of the materials usage case, a given material may not meet every point below. However,  
26 the preponderance of evidence should support the selection decision in its usage context.

### 27 General Criteria for Selection:

- 28 • Educational purpose (as defined by the Tennessee State Academic Standards)
- 29
- 30 • Contribution the subject matter makes to the curriculum and to the interests of the students
- 31
- 32 • Appropriateness to social, emotional, and intellectual level of intended audience
- 33
- 34 • Measures of complexity: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Reader and Task are appropriate for grade-  
35 level and time of year
- 36
- 37 • Favorable reviews found in standard selection sources
- 38
- 39 • Favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional  
40 personnel
- 41
- 42 • Reputation and significance of the author, producer, and publisher
- 43
- 44 • Validity, currency, and appropriateness of the material
- 45
- 46 • Contribution each material makes to the breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial issues  
47 offered by the materials collection as a whole
- 48
- 49 • High degree of potential user appeal
- 50

- 1 • High artistic quality and/or literary style
- 2
- 3 • Quality and variety of format
- 4
- 5 • Value commensurate with cost and/or need
- 6
- 7 • Timeliness or permanence
- 8

9 All materials must be age-appropriate for the student(s) to whom they are assigned or made available. Any  
 10 instructional materials that include content which might be considered sensitive by parents or students (for  
 11 example, materials that might contain coarse language, graphic violence, explicit sexual content, illegal use  
 12 of drugs or alcohol, acutely illicit activity, malicious denigration of religious beliefs, and/or extremist  
 13 inducements) must be assessed and approved at the school level using the IMA process prior to being  
 14 assigned. If there is any question as to whether instructional materials are potentially sensitive, then they  
 15 should be treated as such.

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 17 If such instructional materials are assessed and reviewed at the school level and it is determined that their  
 18 literary and/or educational value greatly outweighs the concerns over the sensitive material, then the  
 19 materials may be utilized, but only if clear, timely, and detailed notification is made to students and parents  
 20 about the sensitive content, and alternative materials are offered and communicated at the time of the  
 21 assignment. Detailed documentation of the IMA process and review shall be forwarded to the Office of  
 22 Teaching and Learning well prior to the materials being assigned.

23  
 24 If there is not significant literary and/or educational value to the instructional materials being assessed, or if  
 25 that value does not outweigh the potentially sensitive content, such instructional materials will not be  
 26 assigned nor utilized.

## 27 **DISCLOSURE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

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 29 To the extent possible, materials used during the course of direct instruction as supplements to the adopted  
 30 HQIM curriculum should be openly disclosed to parents and guardians *sufficiently in advance of their use*  
 31 *with students*.

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- 34 • At the elementary school level, resources and instructional materials selected from outside the  
 35 curriculum, including selections by guest readers and other special events, should be communicated  
 36 through appropriate communication channels (for example: classroom newsletters, websites, class  
 37 pages, etc.).
- 38
- 39 • At the secondary school level, all resources and instructional materials used during the course of study  
 40 should be included in the syllabus and posted for students and their parents/guardians through the  
 41 learning management system. Schools are responsible for ensuring syllabi have been posted. If  
 42 teachers discover a useful resource after the syllabus has been posted, parents/guardians must be  
 43 notified via a syllabus addendum at least two weeks before the start of instruction.
- 44

45 Should a learning opportunity (e.g. a current event requiring a video clip) relating specifically to a teacher's  
 46 curriculum unexpectedly arise during the course of study, the teacher is expected to use professional  
 47 judgment along with the established selection criteria to determine the appropriate use with students. If the  
 48 instructional material in question contains potentially sensitive material, then said materials should not be  
 49 used until such time as a thorough IMA can be conducted by the teacher, approved by the principal or his/her  
 50 designee, and communicated to parents through the best available method.

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2 Materials used outside the course of direct instruction, such as those made available for independent choice  
3 reading, will be posted online for parents/guardians to access, in accordance with Board of Education Policy  
4 I-241 "School Libraries."

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- 6 • A list of the materials in each school's classroom libraries will be posted on the school website.
- 7
- 8 • Each school library's open public access catalog (OPAC) will be linked on the school website so that  
9 the school library collection may be searched.
- 10

11 Materials used for special events, summer reading, and/or school-wide reading promotions should be  
12 reviewed and communicated to parents well in advance of the event or assignments.

13  
14 Parent notification is not required for the showing of audiovisual works in the following categories, which  
15 are disclosed in other ways:

- 16
- 17 • Materials included in education programs, which have been adopted by the Knox County Board of  
18 Education, *i.e.* Character Education and Drug and Violence Prevention.
- 19
- 20 • Materials provided by the Student Support Services Department specifically for use by school  
21 counselors.
- 22
- 23 • Materials supplied as ancillaries by publishers of Board-approved and adopted textbooks and  
24 instructional materials.
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## 26 **CONCERNS ABOUT SELECTED MATERIALS**

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28 In the event that a student, a student's parent or legal guardian, or a school employee has a concern about a  
29 material selected for instruction in the student's or employee's school, they may request an alternate  
30 assignment for their student. Alternate assignments will receive the same level of instructional and  
31 assessment rigor as the primary assignment. Instructional materials prescribed within the established  
32 curricula for Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, dual credit, and International Baccalaureate Programme  
33 courses are on a post-secondary level and are considered appropriate for this level of academic endeavor.  
34 Enrollment in these courses constitutes acceptance of the instructional program. Alternate assignments will  
35 not generally be available for this level of coursework.

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37 Feedback on instructional materials will be addressed using the process outlined in Knox County Schools  
38 Administrative Procedure AP-I-212 "Reconsideration of Instructional Materials and Textbooks."  
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