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AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Item: LIBRARY RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES Item Number: 107.1
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School libraries as instructional material centers

The American Association of School Librarians believes that the school library, in addition to doing its vital work of individual reading guidance and development of the school curriculum, should serve the school as a center for instructional materials. Instructional materials include books--the literature of children, young people and adults--other printed materials, films, recordings, and newer media developed to aid learning.

Teaching methods advocated by leaders in the field of curriculum development and now used in elementary and secondary education call for extensive and frequently combined use of traditional along with many new and different kinds of materials. Since these methods depend for their success upon a cross-media approach to learning, a convenient way of approaching instructional materials on a subject or problem basis must be immediately at hand in each school. Historically, libraries of all types have been established to provide convenient centers for books and reading and for locating ideas and information important to the communities they serve. The interest a modern school now has in finding and using good motion pictures, sound recordings, filmstrips and other newer materials simply challenges and gives increased dimension to established library roles.

The school librarian has always encouraged development of appreciation for and ability to make good and continuing use of printed materials and library services. Taking into account individual differences of children and young people, the school library stimulates and guides each child in the selection and use of materials for the building of taste on appropriate levels of maturity. Now in good library practice, the school library also helps both pupils and teachers to discover new materials and the equipment needed for their use for both individual and classroom study and teaching.

The function of an instructional materials center is to locate, gather, provide and coordinate a school's materials for learning and the equipment required for use of these materials. Primary responsibility for administering such a center, producing new instructional materials, and supervising regular programs of in-service training for use of materials may be the province of librarians, or, it may be shared. In any case, trained school librarians must be ready to cooperate with others and themselves serve as coordinators, consultants, and supervisors of instructional materials service on each level of school administration--in the individual school building, for the city or county unit, for the state.

School librarians are normally educated as teachers and meet state requirements for regular teaching certificates. They must also receive training in analysis, educational evaluation, selection, organization, systematic distribution and use

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of instructional materials. The professional education of school librarians should contribute this basic knowledge as well as provide understanding of fundamental learning processes, teaching methods, and the psychology of children and adolescents. Also, school librarians must be familiar with the history and current trends in development of school curricula.

In summary, the well-trained professional school librarian should anticipate service as both a teacher and as an instructional materials specialist. Where adequate funds and staff are available, the school library can serve as an efficient and economical means of coordinating the instructional materials and equipment needed for a given school program. It should always stand ready to provide informed guidance concerning selection and use of both printed and newer media.

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School libraries and the Library Services Act

Because of the recent passage of the Library Services Act, the Board of Directors of the American Association of School Librarians feels that at this time it is important for school and public librarians to review the distinctive functions of school library service and public library service and to distinguish clearly between them. Therefore, the Board of the American Association of School Librarians wishes to confirm the following statement from PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE:¹ "Public library service to schools is not a substitute for a library within the school. The public library activities should be designed to encourage the growth of school libraries."

The Board of the American Association of School Librarians believes that school library services planned, financed and administered by the Board of Education are a necessary part of a good educational program. The Board believes further that the development and improvement of such library service to provide for children in school the library resources that are related to the curriculum and needed for an effective school program are primary responsibilities of school administrators and school librarians.

There are many ways in which school librarians can be of service in the implementation of the Library Services Act: (1) by planning and participating in the extension and improvement for library service in rural areas through public libraries; (2) by recruitment of young people for work in libraries; and (3) by cooperation in the development of plans for demonstrations under the Act.

The Board of the American Association of School Librarians takes this opportunity to point out that the purpose of the Library Services Act is "to promote the further extension by the several states of public library services to rural areas."² It believes that if funds provided by the Act were used to finance a library within a school, such use would be contrary to the intent of this legislation, and would deter the development of school libraries within the schools.

The Board of the American Association of School Librarians wishes also to enlist the understanding and support of public library personnel for the continuing development of school library service which is an integral part of school administration and of instruction. Public library personnel can provide such support through interpretation to the lay public of this statement and the statements herein quoted from PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE.

¹PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE; A GUIDE TO EVALUATION WITH MINIMUM STANDARDS. Prepared by the Coordinating Committee on Revision of Public Library Standards of the ALA Public Libraries Division. The American Library Association, 1956. \$1.50 P. 23.

(Endorsed by the Board of Directors of the Public Libraries Division, June 28, 1957)

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School libraries - use of instructional materials

WHEREAS, Diverse materials in all fields of communication are used by teachers for optimum results in the learning process; and

WHEREAS, Each instructional medium is unique in its contribution to a specific learning situation; and

WHEREAS, Successful and efficient use of instructional materials presupposes the ability to evaluate and use materials discriminately; and

WHEREAS, Providing instructional materials to meet the needs of the curriculum is an important function of the school library; and

WHEREAS, A study made by the National Education Association in 1958, reported in RESEARCH MONOGRAPH 1958-M1: "The Secondary-School Teachers and Library Services," found that only 13.1% of 1,448 teachers who participated in the survey had received instruction in the role and function of the school library as a definite part of their professional training; therefore

RESOLVED, That the American Association of School Librarians, a division of the American Library Association,* favors the introduction or development of instruction in the use of libraries and of printed and audio-visual materials in all teacher-training programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the intent of this resolution, to promote competency in the use of library resources, be conveyed in an appropriate statement to the editors of major journals of education, to national professional associations of teachers and school administrators, and to pertinent certification agencies.

(This resolution, as presented to the membership of the American Association of School Librarians by the Committee on Professional Status and Growth at the ALA Conference in Montreal, was approved June 20, 1960.)

*On June 30, 1960, the American Association of School Librarians was voted a department of the National Education Association while remaining a division of the American Library Association.

[As of January 1969 the status of the American Association of School Librarians with the National Education Association changed to that of Associated Organization]

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School libraries - selection of materials

The following statement of policy-making with regard to materials selection for school libraries is offered as a guide to those wishing to formulate a policy. It is believed that such a policy should be formally adopted by each school district as a basis for consistent excellence in choice of materials and as a document that can be presented to parents and other citizens for their further understanding of the purposes and standards of selection of school library materials.

Patterns of Policy Making

The governing body of a school is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of that school. It is recommended that assumption of responsibility and the delegation of authority be stated in a formal policy adopted by the legally responsible body.

Selection Personnel

Materials for school libraries should be selected by professional personnel in consultation with administration, faculty, students and parents. Final decision on purchase should rest with professional personnel in accordance with the formally adopted policy.

Types of Materials Covered

There should be criteria established for all types of materials included in a library collection. Such criteria should be available in written form.

Objectives of Selection

The primary objective of a school library is to implement, enrich and support the educational program of the school. Other objectives are concerned with: 1) the development of reading skill, literary taste, discrimination in choice of materials, and 2) instruction in the use of books and libraries.

The school library should contribute to development of the social, intellectual and spiritual values of the students.

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Criteria for Selection

1. Needs of the individual school
 - a. based on knowledge of the curriculum
 - b. based on requests from administrators and teachers
2. Needs of the individual student
 - a. based on knowledge of children and youth
 - b. based on requests of parents and students
3. Provision of a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
4. Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
5. Provision of materials with superior format.

Selection Tools

Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids should be consulted as guides.

Challenged Materials

A procedure should be established for consideration of and action on criticism of materials by individuals or groups. The SCHOOL LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS [Policy Number 103.5, 103.5.1] endorsed by the Council of the American Library Association in July, 1955, is basic to this procedure.

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School libraries - review copies of trade books

WHEREAS: The evergrowing need for more trade (library) books in elementary, junior and senior high schools and in institutions with programs of teacher and library preparation has resulted in an increasing number of requests to the publishers for review copies of new books:

The desirability of having librarians and teachers examine trade books before purchasing them is recongized, but it is also acknowledged that it is not economically feasible for the trade book publishers to grant all the requests made of them from individual teachers and librarians in schools and colleges;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Examination copies of trade books suitable for use in schools can justifiably be requested by large school systems with (a) a school library supervisor, (b) sufficient funds for the purchase of multiple copies, and (c) an active book evaluation and book selection program;
2. It is the responsibility of the school library supervisor to make examination copies as widely available as possible to all interested professional people--librarians, teachers, curriculum specialists, and others;
3. Since a collection of trade books suitable for library collections in elementary, junior, and senior high schools is an essential tool in any college or university with a program of teacher and/or librarian preparation, funds should be allocated by these institutions for the purchase of books required by the instructors for effective programs of teachers and/or librarian education.

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Community library service - public library
and school library responsibilities

WHEREAS, The Public Library Association believes that the time has come for both public libraries and public schools to recognize the need for improved library facilities and services for both the community at large and for the public schools, to meet the educational challenge of the time and the needs of our citizens of all ages, individually and severally, and

WHEREAS, Both public libraries and public schools should give recognition to and accept their responsibilities to meet this need, and

WHEREAS, The community as a whole is entitled to secure the maximum use of all library facilities and services supported by public funds;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That public libraries and school officials work in their respective fields to improve both public libraries and public school libraries, that they reach common understandings of the respective educational roles and areas of responsibility for public libraries and public school libraries, and that they develop cooperative programs so that the community as a whole may benefit through availability of the widest range and depth of library resources and services for the tax dollars expended.