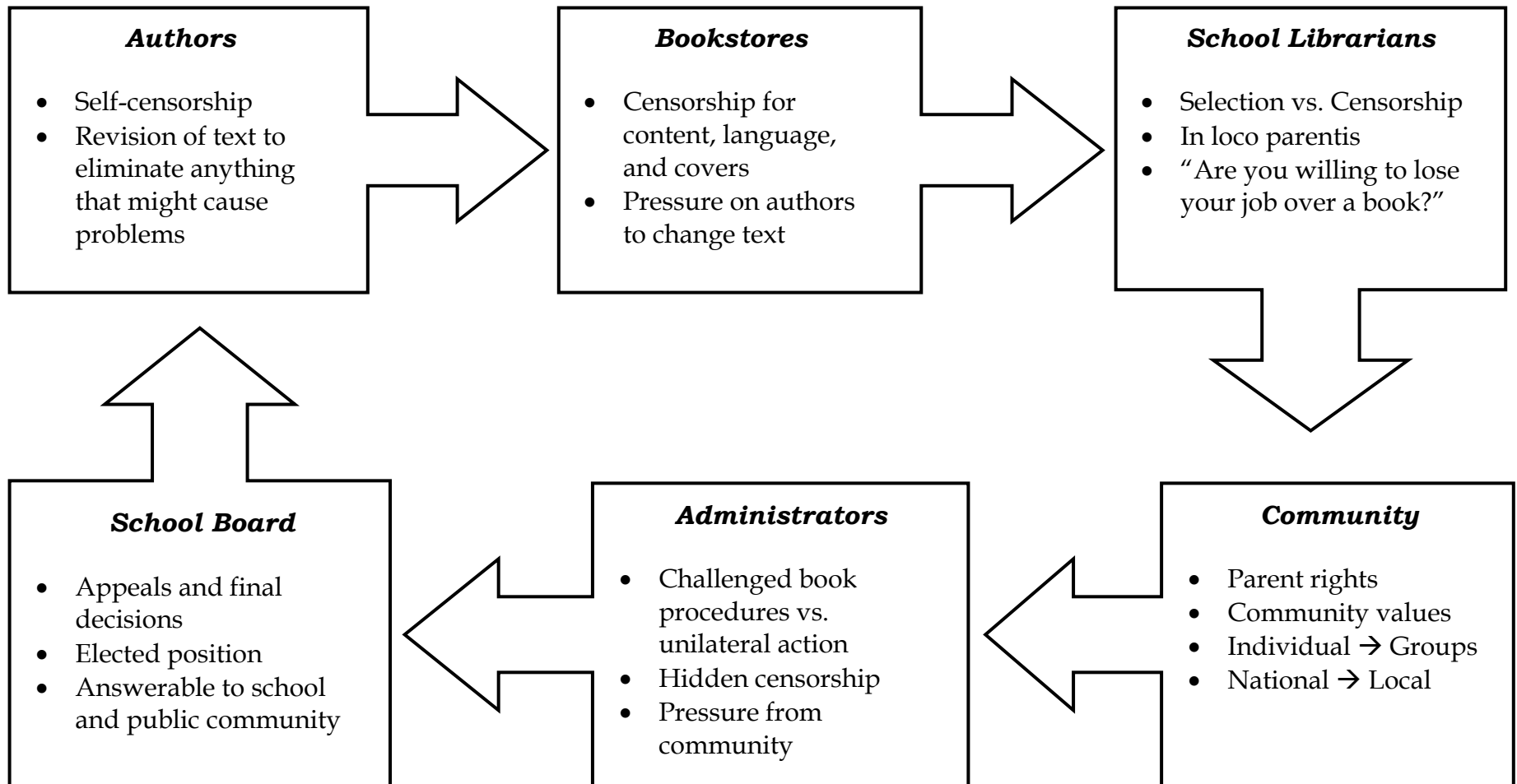
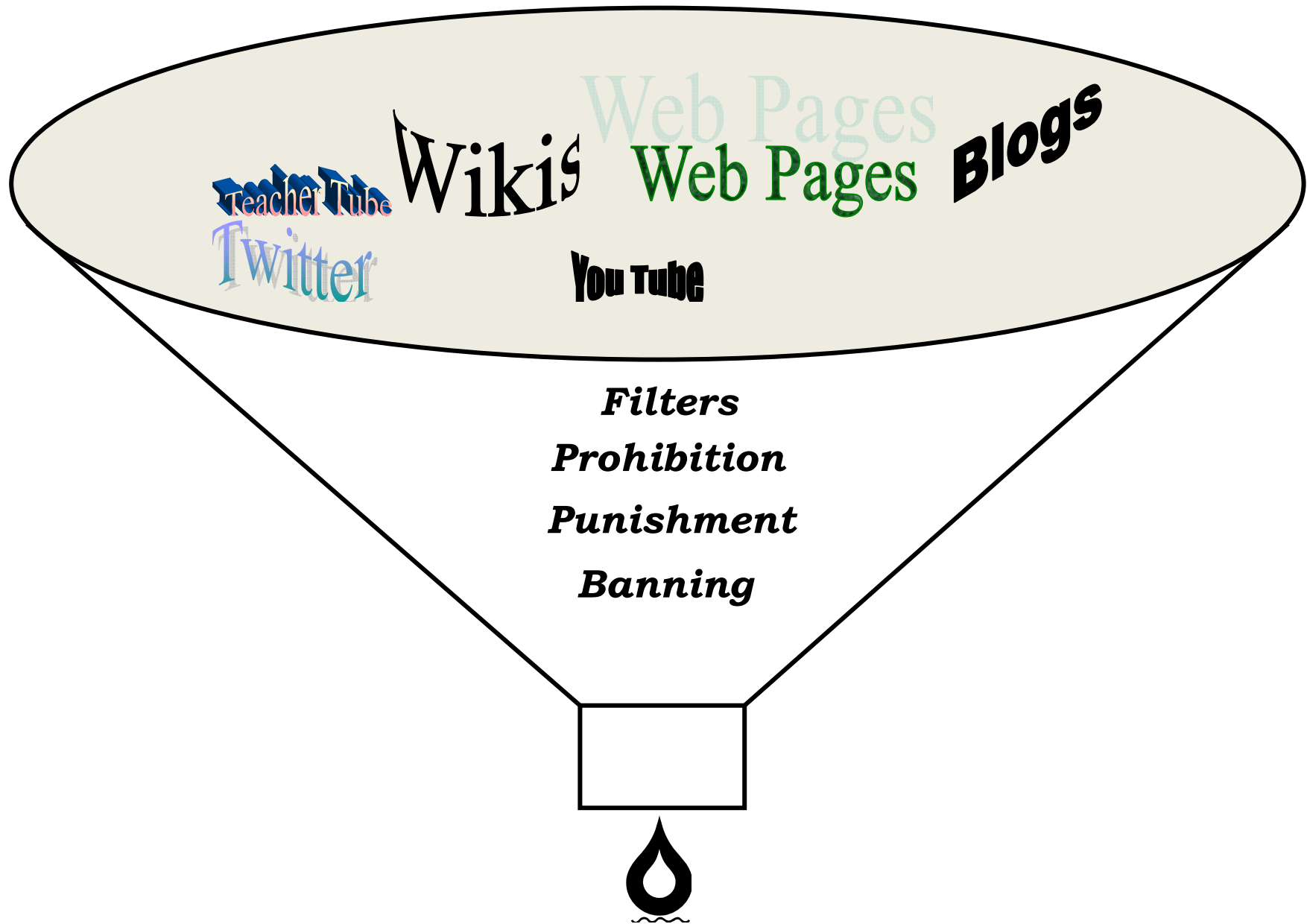


Minors' Rights in School Library Media Centers: The Chilling Cycle of Censorship in Public School Libraries

Barbara Stripling



**Minors' Rights in School Library Media Centers:
The Web 2.0 Funnel of Censorship in Public School Libraries**
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Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: NEW COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Section: 604.7

Board Report: 06-0322-PO1

Date Adopted: March 22, 2006

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education adopt a new Collection Development Policy for School Libraries.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to adopt criteria for the selection, removal and replacement of library materials in the central school libraries of Chicago Public Schools. The policy is guided by principles set forth in: (1) the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its interpretation for school libraries, and (2) the Illinois School Library Media Association's *Linking for Learning: The Illinois School Library Media Program Guidelines* (2nd edition, 2005).

POLICY TEXT:

Library collection development is the ongoing process of identifying strengths and weaknesses of the school's library collection in terms of student needs. The Chicago Public Schools (CPS) shall provide a broad range of educational, informational, and recreational reading resources through its school libraries in order to support the school curriculum and create students who are effective users of ideas and information, competent and enthusiastic readers, independent learners, and positive contributors to the school community and to society. Quality materials should be available in a variety of formats and reading levels, offer a well-balanced coverage of subjects, and support the diverse interests, needs and viewpoints of the school community.

A. Criteria for Selection

The school's professional library staff has primary responsibility for selecting library materials in accordance with the school's curriculum and instructional program. The selection process may include consultation with school administrators, other teachers, students and parents, and staff of the CPS Department of Libraries and Information Services. If the school does not have a properly certified school librarian, the teacher who staffs the library should consult with professional staff in the Department of Libraries and Information Services in selecting library materials.

The following criteria shall be used in selecting school library materials:

1. Materials should support the school's and the District's educational goals and policies, including the advancement of student literacy.
2. Materials should be selected to support, enrich and extend the school's curriculum and to encourage informational, educational and recreational reading, viewing and/or listening.
3. Consideration should be given to diverse user interests, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, languages, and maturity levels. Materials intended for student use should be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, social development, ability levels, special needs, and learning styles of students served by the collection.
4. Materials should represent various viewpoints on controversial issues so that students learn to explore, analyze and make intelligent judgments.
5. The value of a work should be examined as a whole and given greater weight than individual words, phrases or passages contained in the work.
6. In order to assure quality selection the following additional factors will be weighed as they apply:
 - a) Educational significance and/or contribution to the curriculum;
 - b) Informational or recreational interest;
 - c) Reputation and significance of the author, producer, editor and/or publisher;

- d) Degree of potential user appeal;
- e) Contribution to the variety in viewpoints offered on controversial issues;
- f) Accuracy and currency of information;
- g) Arrangement and organization of the material (for example, indices, glossaries, tables of contents, chapter headings, etc.);
- h) Artistic quality, literary style or production values;
- i) Readability levels;
- j) Quality and variety of format;
- k) Need for duplicate copies of extensively used materials;
- l) Need to replace essential/required worn, damaged, or missing materials; and
- m) Value commensurate with cost and/or need.

B. Selection Tools

The following are resources that may be used to assist in the selection process:

1. Reviews in professional, reputable sources such as *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Horn Book*, *Bulletin for the Center for Children's Books*, *Voice of Youth Advocates*, *AASA Science Books and Films*, and *American Film & Video Association*.
2. Recommendations by the CPS Department of Libraries and Information Services, the Chicago Public Library's Department of Children's and Youth Services, ALA's Young Adult Library Services Association, and children's literature experts such as Dr. Peggy Sharp, Michael Cart, Jim Trelease, Judy Freeman, and Hazel Rochman.
3. National and state awards such as Caldecott, Newbery, Coretta Scott King, Rebecca Caudill, Abraham Lincoln, Monarch, Alex, and Michael Printz.
4. Professional selection bibliographies such as *The Best in Children's Books*, *Elementary School Library Collection*, *Books for the Teen Age*, *Best Books for Young Teen Readers*, *Senior High School Library Catalog*, and *Middle and Junior High School Library Catalog*.
5. Online collection development tools such as Follett's *Titlewave* and Baker & Taylor's *School Selection*.
6. Recommendations by faculty, administration, students or parents.

C. Weeding

Weeding is essential to maintaining a relevant, attractive collection. Professional library staff should periodically review the collection to determine which materials should be removed or replaced. Materials to consider for weeding include items that are in poor physical condition or have been superseded by more current information, and those containing subject matter no longer needed to support the curriculum; receiving little use; providing wrong, inaccurate or dated information; or encouraging stereotypes or biases. The CPS Department of Libraries and Information Services shall post specific guidelines for weeding on its department web site. Weeding decisions should be made by the school's professional library staff, who may consult with school administrators, other teachers, students, parents, and staff of the CPS Department of Libraries and Information Services.

D. Criteria and Procedures for Library Donations

1. Criteria

Organizations and individuals frequently express an interest in donating books and other resources to CPS libraries. Generally, professional library staff must review potential library donations using the same criteria as purchased material. Additional criteria include the following:

- a) Donated materials should be new or barely used (in good to excellent condition with no writing or other defacing), complete, clean, durable, and attractive;

- b) Reference materials, including atlases, encyclopedias, subject specific multi-volume sets, and other non-fiction resources should be no more than five years old; science, medical, computer, and other resources in areas in which information quickly becomes outdated should be no more than three years old. Book sets should be complete;
- c) Fiction books should be no more than eight years old with the exception of books by well-known children's authors and classics;
- d) All materials should have a reading level and an interest level of Pre-K through 12th grade;
- e) Non-fiction books should not reflect outdated stereotypes of racial or cultural groups in either the text or the illustrations and should avoid oversimplification of complex issues and other distortions that would give readers erroneous or misleading information; and
- f) Materials that generally are not appropriate for library use, such as textbooks, consumable instructional materials such as workbooks, standardized tests, most periodicals, pamphlets, and catalogs will not be accepted.

2. Procedures

- a) The Chief Financial Officer should be notified of all gifts and donations in accordance with the policy on Acceptance of All Grants, Gifts and Donations (Board Report 04-1027-PO1), as amended from time to time.
- b) Any gift or donation with a value of at least \$500 should be recorded on the Asset Register pursuant to the Maintenance and Disposal of Assets Policy (Board Report 04-0526-PO1), as amended from time to time.

E. Procedure for Challenges to Library Resources

The Board acknowledges the interests of parents, students, teachers, librarians, administrators and other members of the school community in CPS library resources. When a challenge is raised about materials that are maintained in a library or a request is made to include additional materials (collectively, "complaint"), the librarian needs to consider the individual's interest in expressing a complaint, the requirements set out in this policy, and the principles of Intellectual Freedom as expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its interpretation for school libraries. If the complaint cannot be resolved through an informal telephone conference or meeting between the complainant and the librarian or principal, as appropriate, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Listen calmly and objectively to the complaint. Explain briefly the selection criteria and procedures established by Chicago Public Schools in this collection development policy.
2. Provide the complainant a copy of this policy and the complaint form, which can be found at http://www.oism.cps.k12.il.us/dept_libraries.shtml. Explain that the signed and completed form must be submitted before further action is taken. If the librarian or principal does not receive a completed and signed form within two weeks, he or she may consider the matter to be resolved.
3. Upon receipt of a signed and completed complaint, the librarian shall notify the school's Area library coordinator in the Department of Libraries and Information Services. Within ten (10) school days of receipt of the complaint, the Area library coordinator will form a review committee with the librarian and principal and will meet or confer about it.
4. The review committee will determine whether the material that is challenged or requested meets the criteria for selection set forth in this collection development policy.
5. The written decision of the committee will be sent to the complainant within 30 days of receipt of the complaint.

6. The complainant may challenge the committee's decision by making a written appeal to the Director of the Department of Libraries and Information Services (Director). The Director will provide the Area Instruction Officer (AIO) of the involved school a copy of the Complaint, the committee's decision, and the written appeal. With input from the AIO, the Director will render a final decision on the appeal.
7. Complainants may not raise the same or substantially same challenge after the appeal has been decided or matter closed.
8. Challenged material may remain in circulation until this review and appeal process is completed.

Amends/Rescinds:

Cross References:

Legal References: