

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

May 24, 2023

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Monifa B. McKnight, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: School Media Program Book Collection

During the public comments portion of the April 20, 2023, Board of Education business meeting, Mr. Jeremiah Tucker expressed his concerns with the required teaching of some of the inclusive books. Board members requested information on how we monitor our school media program book collections to ensure it is a diverse and inclusive collection.

A full-time, certified school library media specialist staffs every general education school library media program. Library staffing of special schools in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) varies. Some do not have a library media specialist, some have a part-time certified specialist, and some have a full-time certified specialist. Certified school library media specialists have been trained, through a graduate program and by the School Library Media Programs (SLMP) office in MCPS, on how to curate a culturally diverse and inclusive school library collection of print and digital resources. SLMP promotes school library collections that are current, diverse, inclusive, and supports curriculum and student interests in a variety of ways:

1. SLMP relies on [MCPS Regulation IIB-RA: Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials and Library Books](#) to guide the evaluation and selection of library materials.
2. The SLMP office staff trains school media staff how to ensure they are purchasing high-quality literature that is both diverse and inclusive by:
 - a. Providing face-to-face support in regular professional development meetings throughout the school year. The meetings are held in August, October, and March.
 - b. Addressing collection development, specifically during quarterly Professional Learning Community meetings in September, November, February, and May.
 - c. Offering selection resources from our School Library Media Programs [Collection Development Website](#), which includes award-winning and inclusive book lists, external websites, professional library journal reviews, etc.
 - i. [Antiracist Antibias Collection Reflection Tool](#)
 - ii. [Adding an LGBTQ+ Lens to Our Critical Selection Repertoire](#) tool
 - d. Including media center [best practices guidance](#) when the schools receive their new per pupil allocations in May.

3. School Library Media Specialists utilize centrally purchased online tools to analyze their library collections:
 - a. Teachingbooks.net
 - i. Diversity Toolkit
 - ii. Booklist and Collection Analysis Tool
 - b. Follet Library Manager
 - i. Titlewise Collection Analysis with a Diversity Analysis tool
 - ii. Diversity Analysis

This [aggregate report](#) is just one measure we use in libraries, providing us only partial information about the collection's diversity. The diversity tagging on books focuses on the subject of the book and not necessarily the identity of the character. For instance, if the main character in the book identifies as non-binary and the storyline focuses on that character coming out, then the book would be tagged LGBTQ+. If a main character presents as non-binary, but the story is about an adventure, the LGBTQ+ tag may not necessarily be applied.

If you have any questions, please contact, Ms. Andrea L. Christman, supervisor of school library media programs, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, or Mrs. Margaret B. Gaudino, coordinator of evaluation and selection of instructional materials, Department of Materials Management, via email.

MBM:PKM:SSS:awr

Copy to:

Executive Staff
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