



CORVALLIS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Weeding in School Libraries

Updated March 8, 2023

What is Weeding?

Weeding is a crucial part of library collection maintenance. We have to build a collection and activities to uphold the [Freedom to Read Statement and Library Bill of Rights](#) of the American Library Association.



Why Weed?

According to the [American Library Association guidelines](#), school libraries should have high-interest and newer collections. Before current weeding, copyright date averages showed all our collections were very old. We have thousands of books not borrowed since 2017.

Weeding:

- Helps provide high quality materials.
- Addresses limited space.
- Improves access and visibility of existing books.
- Helps determine areas of need in the library collection.
- Helps us adapt to changing curriculum needs.
- Makes it easy to find age-appropriate, high quality, and up-to-date resources.

“Discarding obsolete or damaged material – aka weeding- helps ensure our collections remain appealing and current. The process also highlights areas where there is room for growth. An up-to-date collection, even small, is better than one filled with outdated or worn material.”

- School Library Journal, [To Weed or Not to Weed?](#)

The district believes that children should see themselves in books and learn about the lives of others through literature.

[Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors](#) - Rudine Sims Bishop



Based on these guidelines, the district’s [Racial Educational Equity Policy \(JBB\)](#), and our [Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students Policy \(JBC\)](#), our goals are for students to have access to books that:

- Have characters from different cultures, races, and experiences.



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- Expose readers to other points of view, perspectives, and issues.
- Are from many genres covering different issues and events.
- Talk about socioeconomic struggles, LGBTQ issues, and have characters with disabilities and mental health challenges.

Weeding Criteria

When weeding we consider many factors. We track circulation to see if our books draw students to reading. If books do not circulate after five to seven years, we consider removing them for materials that better capture our students' interest.

Beyond circulation data, weeding criteria look at:

- Condition
- Age
- Frequency of use
- Multiple copies
- Publish date
- Student interest
- Quality of the books in the library

The district follows specific criteria from the [Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding \(CREW\) Method Weeding Manual](#) when deciding if a title should stay or go:



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- **M:** Misleading, factually inaccurate, containing obsolete information, racial, cultural, and sexual stereotyping
- **U:** Ugly - Physical appearance of the book, wear, stains, damage beyond mending or repair
- **S:** Superseded by a new edition or better book on the subject (includes duplicate copies)
- **T:** Trivial - Of no discernible literary or scientific merit or entertainment value
- **I:** Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the library's community
- **E:** Elsewhere - Nonessential material easily obtainable from another resource.



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Optimal Library Size

[Recommendations](#) for the number of books in elementary school libraries from the American Library Association (ALA) are 15-20 books per student.



As the district designed our library spaces for our bond, we estimated 20-25 books per student. We use weeding guidelines to help libraries be engaging places for students with books they want to read! We are excited about our library design and the future of our libraries.

What Happens to the Books That We Weed Out?

Weeded books and materials go through collection development guidelines before they leave our school libraries. Once removed from the shelves, they are de-processed from the library system.

Our school library technicians do their best to make sure every weeded title gets a "second chance." This process can include the following:

- Checking with other Corvallis District schools
- Offering books to teachers as classroom materials
- Offering books to students and parents to keep at home
- Donations to outside organizations, institutions, or programs
- Using books for materials in maker and art spaces

Any materials not acceptable for the second chance option are sent to the District Office for discard. The district and the school principal approve all weeded materials.

If you have questions about the district library weeding process, please contact Aislyn Brown, the district librarian, at aislyn.brown@corvallis.k12.or.us.