FOR ACTION: Social Studies Elementary Textbook Adoption Waiver 2009-2010 Textbooks

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of School Trustees approve the following waiver for elementary social studies textbooks.

Background Information

Each year the State of Indiana requires school corporations to determine which textbooks will be adopted for a designated subject area(s). Textbooks are adopted at different times throughout the six-year cycle and are approved for a six-year period. Social Studies textbooks were up for adoption during the 2008-2009 school year. Indiana code requires that each course listed in the Indiana Department of Education's Course Description Catalog satisfy the textbook adoption requirements by (a) adopting at least one current or continued publisher title from the Official Adoption list, (2) receiving an approved waiver not to adopt a textbook, or (3) receiving an approved waiver to adopt a publisher's title not listed on the Official Adoption List.

The Elementary Social Studies Textbook Adoption Committee, comprised of parents, general education teachers, special education teachers, and ENL teachers was established in September 2008 to review and evaluate textbooks. Committee members solicited the input of other faculty members and parents to insure the selection of textbooks/materials was representative of the entire school community. Teachers throughout the corporation attended textbook company presentations and evaluated textbook samples in individual buildings.

This year was particularly challenging for social studies textbook adoption considering the news from the Indiana Department of Education regarding the inadequacy of previewed textbooks, and the late arrival of the approved social studies textbook list (please see An Open Letter to Indiana Educators about Textbooks, Computers and Instructional Materials). Over the course of the many months, MCCSC teachers and parents evaluated textbooks and began the selection process. An enormous amount of time was spent reviewing all materials, engaging in conversations about needed resources and discussing which textbooks/materials best met the needs of students. Elementary principals and teachers feel social studies support materials and resources are needed for students. Teachers recognize it is their job to make the material come alive for the students and to teach the Indiana Academic Standards using a variety of resource materials that best meet the needs of a variety of learners.

Recommendation

Indiana Code 20-26-12-28 gives each school corporation flexibility to request a waiver from textbook adoption requirements if the school board believes that the education needs of students can best be served by not adopting a textbook on the approved
adoption list. The Elementary Social Studies Textbook Adoption Committee is requesting a waiver for elementary social studies textbooks. Social studies ancillary support materials, instructional software, internet resources, and other systematically organized materials will be selected by the Social Studies Textbook Adoption Committee during the 2009-2010 school year. The current elementary social studies textbook will continue to be used throughout the 2009-2010 school year.