

Secondary Novel Approval Request November 2018

The texts brought forth in this request for School Board approval represent contemporary literature that aligns with our Mission, Vision, and Core Values while supporting the strategic objectives to engage every student and improve opportunity and achievement.

Over 75 professional educators have informed this request for additions to the approved texts list. No books will be removed from the current approved list, however, teachers will be expected to review their literature choices and to teach utilizing unifying themes in order to provide students appropriate choices regarding specific texts. Students should have the opportunity to read both classic and contemporary literature as well as juried nonfiction texts.

All students should have the opportunity to see themselves reflected in literature and nonfiction texts available to them for academic study, as well as to be exposed to cultures and experiences that may differ from their own.

	Title of Book	Author	Grade	Lexile	Publisher
1	Island's End	Padma Venkatraman	10	800	Penguin Random House
<p>Uido is ecstatic about becoming her tribe's spiritual leader, but her new position brings her older brother's jealousy and her best friend's mistrust. And looming above these troubles are the recent visits of strangers from the mainland who have little regard for nature or the spirits, and tempt the tribe members with gifts, making them curious about modern life. When Uido's little brother falls deathly ill, she must cross the ocean and seek their help. Having now seen so many new things, will Uido have the strength to believe in herself and the old ways? And will her people trust her to lead them to safety when a catastrophic tsunami threatens? Uido must overcome everyone's doubts, including her own, if she is to keep her people safe and preserve the spirituality that has defined them.</p>					
2	Far from the Tree	Robin Benway	11	780	Harper Collins
<p>A contemporary novel about three adopted siblings who find each other at just the right moment.</p> <p>Being the middle child has its ups and downs.</p> <p>But for Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, discovering that she is a middle child is a different ride altogether. After putting her own baby up for adoption, she goes looking for her biological family, including—</p> <p>Maya, her loudmouthed younger bio sister, who has a lot to say about their newfound family ties. Having grown up the snarky brunette in a house full of chipper redheads, she's quick to search for traces of herself among these not-quite-strangers. And when her adopted family's long-buried problems begin to explode to the surface, Maya can't help but wonder where exactly it is that she belongs.</p>					

And Joaquin, their stoic older bio brother, who has no interest in bonding over their shared biological mother. After seventeen years in the foster care system, he's learned that there are no heroes, and secrets and fears are best kept close to the vest, where they can't hurt anyone but him.

3	Dear Martin	Nic Stone	9	720	Penguin Random House
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Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.

Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

4	Refugee	Alan Gratz	7	800	Scholastic
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Three different kids.

One mission in common: ESCAPE.

Josef is a Jewish boy in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world...

Isabel is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety and freedom in America...

Mahmoud is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe...

All three young people will go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers—from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But for each of them, there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, surprising connections will tie their stories together in the end.

5	Taking Flight	Michaela DePrince	10	940	Random House
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The extraordinary memoir of Michaela DePrince, a young dancer who escaped war-torn Sierra Leone for the rarefied heights of American ballet.

Michaela DePrince was known as girl Number 27 at the orphanage, where she was abandoned at a young age and tormented as a "devil child" for a skin condition that makes her skin appear spotted. But it was at the orphanage that Michaela would find a picture of a beautiful ballerina en pointe that would help change the course of her life.

At the age of four, Michaela was adopted by an American family, who encouraged her love of dancing and enrolled her in classes. She went on to study at the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School at the American Ballet Theatre and is currently a member of the Dutch National Ballet's junior company. She

has appeared in the ballet documentary "First Position," as well as on "Dancing with the Stars, Good Morning America," and "Nightline."

In this engaging, moving, and unforgettable memoir, Michaela shares her dramatic journey from an orphan in West Africa to becoming one of ballet's most exciting rising stars.

6	The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian	Sherman Alexie	9	600	Little, Brown and Company
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Bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings by Ellen Forney that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live.

National Book Award for Young People's Literature (2007), Odyssey Award (2009), American Indian Library Association Award, South Carolina Book Award Nominee for Young Adult Book Award (2010), Rhode Island Teen Book Award Nominee (2009) Michigan Library Association Thumbs Up! Award Nominee (2008), Florida Teens Read Nominee (2009), American Indian Youth Literature Award for Best Young Adult Book (Award Retroactively Rescinded in 2018) (2008), Boston Globe-Horn Book Award for Fiction (2008), The Inky Awards Nominee for Silver Inky (2009), California Young Readers Medal for Young Adult (2010), Lincoln Award Nominee (2011), James Cook Book Award Nominee (2009), The Inky Awards Shortlist for Silver Inky (2009)

7	Curious	Ian Leslie	11	N/A	Basic Books
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"I have no special talents," said Albert Einstein. "I am only passionately curious."

Everyone is born curious. But only some retain the habits of exploring, learning, and discovering as they grow older. Those who do so tend to be smarter, more creative, and more successful. So why are many of us allowing our curiosity to wane?

In *Curious*, Ian Leslie makes a passionate case for the cultivation of our "desire to know." Just when the rewards of curiosity have never been higher, it is misunderstood, undervalued, and increasingly monopolized by a cognitive elite. A "curiosity divide" is opening up.

This divide is being exacerbated by the way we use the Internet. Thanks to smartphones and tools such as Google and Wikipedia, we can answer almost any question instantly. But does this easy access to information guarantee the growth of curiosity? No—quite the opposite. Leslie argues that true curiosity the sustained quest for understanding that begets insight and innovation—is in fact at risk in a wired world.

Drawing on fascinating research from psychology, economics, education, and business, *Curious* looks at what feeds curiosity and what starves it, and finds surprising answers. Curiosity isn't, as we're encouraged to think, a gift that keeps on giving. It is a mental muscle that atrophies without regular exercise and a habit that parents, schools, and workplaces need to nurture.

Filled with inspiring stories, case studies, and practical advice, *Curious* will change the way you think about your own mental habits, and those of your family, friends, and colleagues.

8	Originals	Adam Grant	11	N/A	Penguin Books
<p>With <i>Give and Take</i>, Adam Grant not only introduced a landmark new paradigm for success but also established himself as one of his generation's most compelling and provocative thought leaders. In <i>Originals</i> he again addresses the challenge of improving the world, but now from the perspective of becoming original: choosing to champion novel ideas and values that go against the grain, battle conformity, and buck outdated traditions. How can we originate new ideas, policies, and practices without risking it all?</p> <p>Using surprising studies and stories spanning business, politics, sports, and entertainment, Grant explores how to recognize a good idea, speak up without getting silenced, build a coalition of allies, choose the right time to act, and manage fear and doubt; how parents and teachers can nurture originality in children; and how leaders can build cultures that welcome dissent. Learn from an entrepreneur who pitches his start-ups by highlighting the reasons not to invest, a woman at Apple who challenged Steve Jobs from three levels below, an analyst who overturned the rule of secrecy at the CIA, a billionaire financial wizard who fires employees for failing to criticize him, and a TV executive who didn't even work in comedy but saved <i>Seinfeld</i> from the cutting-room floor. The payoff is a set of groundbreaking insights about rejecting conformity and improving the status quo.</p>					