

# **Zionsville Community Schools**

## **Lost and Damaged Library Materials Policy**

### **1. Overdue Materials**

- a. **Zionsville Community Schools do not collect fines for overdue materials.** According to Indiana law, IC 20-26-3-7, “A school corporation does not have...[the] power to prescribe a civil penalty or a fine.”<sup>1</sup>
- b. While there are no fines for overdue materials, students are asked to return materials on or before their due date. (Checkout periods may vary by grade level, building, and type of item.)

### **2. Tracking Due Dates**

- a. All students or parents may inquire about their currently checked-out materials and/or due dates by contacting a member of their building’s media center staff.
- b. Middle school and high school students may check this information by logging into their individual Destiny catalog accounts. (Students or parents/guardians may contact the media center staff with questions about Destiny.)
- c. Students and their parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for keeping track of library material due dates and for ensuring that materials are returned to the media center on time. At their discretion, media center staff may send overdue notices to parents and/or teachers:
  - i. when an item is overdue.
  - ii. at regular intervals throughout the semester.
  - iii. before winter break.
  - iv. before the end of the school year.

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<sup>1</sup> “Unavailable Powers,” 20 IC. Sec. 26-3-7, 2016. <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/2016/ic/titles/020/>.

### 3. Overdue Notices

Overdue notices may be sent physically or electronically to students, teachers or other school staff, parents, or legal guardians. Overdue notices are confidential notices between the school and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

- a. Overdue notices sent to students, teachers, administrators, parents, or guardians may contain the titles of books or materials.
- b. In order to protect the confidentiality of students' library records, the titles of overdue materials should not be shared with parties other than those listed above.

### 4. Lost Items

- a. **Library items are subject to being considered lost:**
  - i. **when they are more than three weeks overdue.**
  - ii. **when a student or parent/guardian communicates that the item is lost.**
  - iii. **if they are not returned by the end of the school year.**
  - iv. **if they are not returned before a student withdraws from school.**
- b. Before the media specialist considers an item to be lost, s(he) will communicate a final date to the parent/guardian by which the item must be returned. This communication may be paper or electronic. Any item not returned by that due date will be considered lost, and a charge for replacement may be assessed.

### 5. Damaged Items

- a. When checking out library materials, students accept responsibility for the physical condition of the items during that time period.
- b. At the discretion of the media specialist, minor repairs to books or other library materials may be performed by the media center staff at no charge to the student.
- c. **Library items are formally considered “damaged” when they have sustained damage that is too severe to be repaired by a member of the media center staff, rendering them unfit for further library circulation, as determined by a member of the media center staff.**
- d. Damage may include, but is not limited to, rips, tears, bends, broken spines, missing pages, marks or drawings, stains, foreign materials that cannot be easily removed, sticky

or tacky surfaces, exposure to bodily fluids or other hazardous materials, and exposure to water or other liquid.

- e. When the media specialist considers an item to be damaged, s(he) will communicate this to the parent/guardian. This communication may be paper or electronic.

## 6. Lost and Damaged Materials Charges

- a. Charges for lost or damaged materials will be collected at least one time per school year in each building, and may be collected more often at the discretion of the media center staff.
- b. A member of the media center staff will communicate with students and/or parents regarding any lost or damaged book charges. This communication may be paper or electronic.
- c. Once library materials have been labeled “lost” or “damaged,” the student and/or parent/guardian are responsible for paying for the replacement cost of each item (as determined by the media specialist), as well as an additional \$2.00 processing fee per item.
- d. **If a lost library item is found after the final date provided by the media specialist to return the item, the student or parent/guardian is still responsible for payment.**
- e. The replacement cost of each item will be determined by the media specialist. In some cases, particularly when the original item is no longer available, the item may be replaced with a different/newer item that fills a similar need in the library collection. The media specialist will determine the replacement item and will price the item with an appropriate vendor, taking into consideration the school’s purchasing and cataloguing procedures, as well as the condition and binding of books.
- f. The \$2.00 processing fee will cover the time and materials needed to process the replacement item, including stickers, labels, covers, catalog records, tape, etc.
- g. A member of the media center staff will provide instructions to the student and parent/guardian for paying any lost or damaged material fees. These instructions will address the process for paying the fees, as well as a due date for the fees. The process may vary by building.
- h. **The media center will not accept items (i.e. newly purchased copies of books) in place of lost or damaged materials.**

- i. Once the parent(s)/guardian(s) have been billed, the charges are final. **Materials may not be returned after the final due date in order to avoid payment, and payments will not be refunded if a book is later found and returned to the media center.** If an item is found after payment has been rendered, the student may elect to keep the item or to donate the item back to the library.
- j. **The parent/guardian may not be billed more than \$100.00 per item unless there is a temporary use agreement on file for a more expensive item (see below).**

## 7. Special or Expensive Materials

- a. In the event that a student borrows an expensive or special item from the library collection (i.e. a piece of audio visual equipment), special policies may be put in place. In these cases, students and/or parents will be provided with a temporary use agreement, which must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the media center before the student can take the item out of the media center. This agreement will specify the terms of the rental, including terms for loss or damage.
- b. In the event that a student and parent/guardian are not provided with a special temporary use agreement for an expensive item borrowed from the library, the media center may not bill the parent/guardian more than \$100.00 for loss/damage of a singular item.
- c. This policy **does not** apply to laptops, chargers, or other equipment rented or borrowed from the corporation's Technology Department. Cost for loss/damage to school-owned laptops will be determined by the laptop rental agreement and the corporation's laptop repair fee schedule.

## 8. Unpaid Charges

- a. A member of the media center staff will provide the parent or guardian with a deadline for the payment of charges for lost or damaged media center materials.
- b. In the event that charges are not paid by the specified deadline, the Zionsville Community School Corporation's business office reserves the right to pursue further action (i.e. debt collection or small claims court).
- c. Unpaid invoiced charges do not expire, and are not negated by the student's transfer to a different building in the corporation, withdrawal from the corporation, or graduation.

## **9. Parent/Guardian Communication**

- a. When communicating about lost or damaged library materials, members of the media center staff may elect to communicate with parents/guardians by paper or electronically.
- b. Except when communicating in person, media center staff members will initiate communication using only the phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses currently on file with the corporation. Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring these channels of communication.