

Guidelines for Showing Films in the Classroom

Northwest Community Schools supports the strategic use of media to enhance the instructional program. Federal legal guidelines have been established to facilitate appropriate selection and utilization of the medium. Individual faculty/staff members and building administrators have the responsibility for implementing these guidelines.

By law, when a teacher shows any film that does not include “public performance rights” he or she must comply with the “Fair Use” provision and Chapter 1, Section 110 of the U.S. Copyright Act. The following is a summary of the guidelines from those documents. Films shown in school must:

- Be used by teachers in the course of “face to face” instruction with students
- Be **directly** related to the curriculum and the **current** instruction
- Be correlated to instructional objectives
- Be shown in the normal instructional setting
- Be “lawfully” made: the teacher has not duplicated a copy in violation of Fair Use, without the permission of the copyright holder.
- Not be used for extra-curricular, reward, recreation, or before or after school use.
- Not be used for fund-raising. No admission should be charged for a film showing.

Films other than those from the school library media center, grade level/department collections, or JCISD central video collection must have prior approval from the principal or designee before broadcast for student viewing.

What does this mean for my classroom?

In regards to films borrowed from the school library media center, grade level/department collections, privately purchased, or rented by teachers:

- Follow the above Fair Use provisions.
- Use of feature films, not originally intended for educational use, can cause problems even when they are used appropriately in the school setting. Movies not rated G have some material to which a parent may object. You should consider the content of the film, the age and maturity of the students, its importance to the curriculum and the preparation the students have had beforehand. If all students meet the age requirement but the content is controversial, permission slips are recommended. Extreme care should be used when you consider showing films rated PG-13 or R.
- Remember to send a parent permission letter prior to showing a film for the following:
 - **Elementary: Any film that does not have a G rating**
 - **Middle/High: Any film in which all students do not meet the age requirement of the MPAA rating.**
- Permission letters should be kept on file by the teacher.

In regards to off-air taping:

- If you tape a video from a regular, commercial, or “free” network, you must apply the Fair Use guidelines. The video may be shown once within ten consecutive school days, and may be repeated once within the same ten-day period.
- There are no fair use rights for exclusively cable channels (A&E, Disney, History channel, etc.). Taping of these programs must be researched on the basis of granted rights for each program. (program rights may found at Cable in the Classroom Online <http://www.ciconline.org>)

In regards to effective instructional use of films and other media:

- Select titles that are aligned with the curriculum.
- Carefully choose segments of a film that are applicable to the instructional content. It is not recommended to show a film in its entirety.
- Introduce the film and explain the curricular connection.
- Pause to stop the film to emphasize points and to encourage interaction.
- Provide a culminating or follow-up activity to reinforce the instructional content.

In regards to persons other than Northwest Community Schools instructional staff:

Parents, students, or guest speakers showing a film in the classroom must also complete the Prior Approval form and co-sign with the teacher and principal or designee.



REQUEST FOR PRIOR APPROVAL To Show Films in School

Films other than those from the school library media center, grade level/department collections, or JCISD's central video collection must have prior approval from the principal or designee before broadcast for student viewing.

Teacher: _____ Date of Request _____

Title of Film: _____

Source of Film:

- Video Rental Store
- Taped Off-Air (Date taped _____)
- Privately owned by Teacher
- Other

MPAA Rating: _____

Learning Objective: (Correlated to curriculum)

Amount of the movie/video to be shown _____ entire film _____ minutes

Film Contains (check all that apply)

- objectionable language
- sexuality
- violence
- other _____
- none of the above

Excerpt Contains (check all that apply)

- objectionable language
- sexuality
- violence
- other _____
- none of the above

Will a parent permission form be sent out?

Yes No

(Attach copy of letter to send to parents)

I have previewed this video in its entirety and find it appropriate to my classroom instructional program.

Teacher's Signature

Prior Approval Granted

Prior Approval Denied

Principal or Designee's Signature

Sample Permission Letter to Parents for Showing Films

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child is currently studying _____ as part of his/her coursework in _____ class. To reinforce your child's learning experience/understanding of _____, I am planning to show (the film / excerpts of the film) _____ on _____.

Though the film is rated (fill in rating), I am convinced of its learning value. The (PG, PG-13, R) rating is due to _____. (The excerpts I will be showing ___ do ___ do not contain the objectionable material.) I can assure you that the film will be shown in appropriate context, including discussion and activities before and after viewing.

Please complete the form below either authorizing or exempting your child from viewing the film. Students who do not view this film will be given a relevant and appropriate alternative assignment.

Feel free to phone or email if you have questions.

Sincerely,
Email:
Phone:

Please complete the following:

Name of Student _____

___ My child may participate in this activity

___ My child may not participate in this activity

Signature: _____