Guidelines for Using the Approved Novel List in the Blue Valley Secondary Communication Arts Classroom:

The Blue Valley district has a process in place for novel titles to be added to or removed from the approved reading list. For a new title to be added to the list, it must be reviewed and recommended by no fewer than four educators who have examined the text for its adherence to Policy 4600, including its connection to the curriculum, its benefits to the course, and its appropriateness for the targeted student.

All titles in the curriculum prior to the 2004-2005 school year were reexamined by a committee of educators during the 2004-2005 school year to insure their adherence to the newly revised Policy 4600 and their relevance to the current course offerings. The review of information included their connection to the curriculum, benefit to the course, and appropriateness for the targeted student.

A teacher must use a novel from the approved list for either whole class or small group instruction. The following guidelines will assist teachers in using novels in the classroom:

Guideline 1: Whole Group Instruction
Any novel used for whole group instruction must be selected from the appropriate course’s approved list. Whole group instruction occurs when a teacher assigns one title for the class to read.

Guideline 2: Small Group Instruction
Any novel used for small group instruction must be selected from the appropriate course’s approved list. For this purpose, small group instruction will be defined as any instance where more than one student is reading the same title and/or the students must select one title from a set list of more than one title. This situation might occur during literature circles or other small group study methods.

Guideline 3: Self-Selected Reading (With Instruction or Class Participation)
Novels used for students’ outside reading do not have to be on the approved list. For this purpose, outside reading will be defined as a novel that is not taught in the classroom but is used, rather, for supplemental or other reading purposes. Outside reads, whether selected through the school library or an extensive list of possible authors to consider, must allow the student choice over the title. Students may share information about their outside read selections through oral presentations or small or large group settings if only one student has selected a particular title. (When multiple students are reading a title for the same purpose, please see Guideline 2 regarding small group instruction.) Teachers will advise students to share their selected titles with their parents. Notification to parents should be included in the course syllabus/class directives that outlines how and
when students may be selecting their own titles throughout the year. No further notification of student choices is necessary unless requested by an individual parent.

**Guideline 4: Required Summer Reading**

Summer reading choices for a course **must** be selected from the appropriate course’s approved list. This includes required titles and titles offered as choices from a short list (fewer than ten; also see guideline 5A), as these titles will be used for instruction (small or whole group) when students begin classes. (See Guidelines 1 and 2 regarding whole and small group instruction.)

**Guideline 5: Exceptions to Using the Approved List**

Suggestions of titles not on the approved list may be made by a teacher or building in three specific situations:

A. when a student has choice over the title (see Guideline 3) AND the list is extensive (10 or more titles) or open-ended (such as selecting a book from the library for outside reading). This situation may be, for example, to suggest authors from a particular literary movement, additional reading over a theme—as modeled in the new anthology, authors or novels from a selected genre or time period, authors recommended by the College Board. This choice may occur more frequently in a course such as reading lab where instruction is individualized with several titles.

B. when providing a list of titles for students to consider reading on their own. These are typically known as suggested reading lists that provide titles for students to consider as they select their own reading. Parents and students often request these lists to help students prepare for college or to encourage reading over the summer.

C. when a grade is not attached to the assignment (either for required or extra credit; both are considered grades). The exception to the extra credit situation would be if a student is able to read other titles of his/her choosing for extra credit. This situation will be governed by Guideline 5A concerning student choice.

**Guideline 6: Alternate Title Requests**

Any parent or student may request an alternate title for any required reading assignment. Parents and teachers will follow the “Guidelines for providing an alternate novel.” This set of guidelines outlines the process for acknowledging a request, selecting an alternate title, and providing instruction with an alternate title.