

CONTROVERSIAL LEARNING RESOURCES

Background

Any resident of the District may challenge the appropriateness of learning resources used in the District's educational program.

The Ministry of Education, through the K-12 Education Plan, has moved to a multiple-resource approach to facilitate curricula delivery in schools. Some resources are approved through the Ministry's approval process; some are locally approved.

While Teachers and Principals/Vice Principals are encouraged to be thorough in their selection and use of various resources, some resources are seen to be "inappropriate" by individuals. It has been the practice of the District to allow individuals with concerns to challenge any resource used in District classrooms. This Administrative Procedure enables such challenges and mandates a process that is deemed to be thorough and just.

Definition

Learning resource is information, represented or stored in a variety of media and formats, which assists student learning as defined by provincial or local curricula.

Procedures

1. A school receiving a challenge regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue internally.
 - 1.1 The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain to the challenger the school's selection procedure, the criteria used and the qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.
 - 1.2 The principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness and additional information regarding its use.
2. If the challenger wishes to file a further complaint, a copy of this policy and a "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form shall be provided by the principal.
 - 2.1 All formal objections to learning resources must be made on a "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form signed by the challenger and filed with the principal.
 - 2.2 The principal shall forward one copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form to the Superintendent of Schools.

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- 2.3 The Superintendent of Schools may, at their discretion, establish a reconsideration committee to re-evaluate the resource and to prepare a report with recommendations. The committee shall consist of a minimum of five members and shall include representation from the following groups: district staff, teaching staff, administrative officers, parents and, when appropriate, students.
 - 2.4 If the Superintendent of Schools decides against the establishment of a reconsideration committee, the challenger may make a written appeal to the Board of Education.
 - 2.5 The Superintendent of Schools shall review the reconsideration committee's report, consider the recommendations and advise the challenger and the school principal of their decision.
 - 2.6 Written reports, once filed, are confidential, but are available for examination upon request.
 - 2.7 The challenger and the school principal shall have the right to appeal to the Board of Education for a final review as per Bylaw No. 4.
3. The person requesting reconsideration shall complete and sign two copies of the "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form and forward it to the school principal.
4. The school principal shall forward one copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form to the Superintendent of Schools.
5. The Superintendent of Schools may establish a reconsideration committee to re-evaluate the learning resource, as per Regulation 2.3.
6. A reconsideration committee shall proceed in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - 6.1 Examine the challenged resource.
 - 6.2 Determine professional acceptance by reading a critical review of the resource, when available.
 - 6.3 Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole, rather than on passages or selections taken out of context.
 - 6.4 Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program.
 - 6.5 Prepare a written report and file it with the Superintendent of Schools, who will review and respond as per Regulation 2.5.
7. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.