

POLICY

It is the policy of the Board to provide a wide range of acceptable learning resources at varying levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and representing different points of view to meet the needs of students and teachers.

Administrative Detail

1. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Superintendent to administer this policy in accordance with the Provision of Learning Resources Procedures Manual 603-A.
2. It is the responsibility of Principals, teachers and program staff to select learning resources for use in the schools, and in consultation, when appropriate, with students and the community.
3. It is the responsibility of the Principal to use the Procedures for the Reconsideration of Learning Resources, as outlined in the Procedures Manual, when responding to challenges of specific learning resources.
4. Formal complaints on the use of specific learning resources will be registered, in writing, on the Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form 603-1.

A. OBJECTIVES OF SELECTION

1. The term "learning resources" refers to either a person(s) or any material with instructional content or function that is used for teaching/learning purposes. Learning resources could include textbooks, other books, supplementary reading and information materials, charts, community resource people, agencies and organizations, dioramas, filmstrips, flash cards, games, globes, kits, machine readable data files, maps, microforms, models, motion pictures, periodicals, pictures, realia, slides, sound recordings, transparencies, videorecords and computer programs.
2. The primary objective of learning resources is to support and enrich the implementation of the educational program.
3. A learning resource may be used with an individual student, small, or large groups of students.

B. CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

1. The following criteria will be used as they apply:
 - a) Learning resources shall support and be consistent with the educational goals of the province, the Board and individual schools as well as aims and objectives of specific courses.
 - b) Learning resources shall meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
 - c) Learning resources shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of the students for whom the resources are selected.
 - d) Learning resources shall have aesthetic, literary, and/or social values and be appropriate for the intended use.
 - e) Learning resources shall be selected:
 - i) to help students gain an awareness of our multicultural and multiracial society and an understanding of the contributions of each group.

- ii) to represent both sexes equally and not perpetuate cultural biases and prejudices based on gender, or ethnic, racial and socio-economic backgrounds.
 - iii) to motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behaviours and to comprehend their own duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges as participating citizens in our society.
- f) Learning resources which are biased or prejudiced in content may be provided to meet specific curriculum objectives (example: to recognize an ideology and its purpose in a given context or to balance an argument).
2. The selection of learning resources on controversial, historical and contemporary issues will be directed towards presenting an equitable view.
 3. Emphasis will be placed on the selection of Canadian learning resources (where appropriate). These resources include learning materials by or about a Canadian person, about a region or event, and/or published or produced in Canada.
 4. Selection is an ongoing process which should include the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost or worn materials still of educational value.

C. PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING LEARNING RESOURCES OF A POTENTIALLY CONTROVERSIAL NATURE

When choosing learning resources that, although educationally valuable, have the potential to cause controversy, these procedures should be followed prior to seeking Board approval.

1. The teachers who wish to use learning resources are to study the content carefully and submit to the Principal, for consideration, the resource and a concise rationale. The Principal is to determine the appropriateness of the learning resource.
2. Rationales prepared by the teacher should include answers to the following questions:
 - a) Why would a teacher consider using this resource with a specific class?
 - b) For what purpose will this material be used and how will it be used?
 - c) How will the material meet the teacher's objectives?

- d) What problems of style, tone, or theme, or other possible grounds for concern exist in the material and how will the teacher address these issues?

D. PROCEDURES FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

The following procedures are for the purpose of reconsidering the provision of learning resources.

1. Guiding Principles

- a) Board employees and any resident of Dufferin or Wellington Counties may challenge learning resources used in Board educational programs for appropriateness.
- b) Principals should bring the selection and reconsideration procedures to the attention of the teaching staff annually. The staff should be reminded that the right to request reconsideration of learning resources is one granted by procedures established by the Board.
- c) Parents/guardians have the right to question reading, viewing or listening material for their own children.
- d) Although it is learning resources which are questioned, the principles of freedom to read/listen must be defended as well.
- e) Access to the questioned learning resource(s) should not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
- f) The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the learning resource(s) for its intended educational use.

2. Informal Reconsideration

School personnel who receive a complaint regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue informally. The Principal and/or other appropriate staff shall explain to the complainant:

- a) the school's selection procedure and criteria;
- b) the qualifications of those selecting the resource;
- c) the intended educational purpose;

- d) how the questioned resource will be used;
- e) additional information regarding its use.

Should the complainant wish to proceed further and file a formal challenge, the following procedures apply.

3. Formal Reconsideration

- a) The Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form 603-1 shall be completed and signed by the complainant and a copy shall be filed with the Principal within 60 days of the use of the resource.
- b) The Principal shall provide copies of the complaint to the Supervisor of Program and the appropriate Superintendent of Education.
- c) The Principal shall form a Reconsideration Committee with the following membership to re-evaluate the resource:
 - i) the Principal of the school,
 - ii) a Board Trustee,
 - iii) a member of the school staff,
 - iv) the appropriate Program Services representative,
 - v) a parent member of the school council, and when appropriate,
 - vi) two students selected by the Principal in conjunction with the staff,
 - vii) a Superintendent of Education, if appropriate.
- d) The committee will select a chairperson and establish a meeting date as soon as possible after receipt of the complaint.
- e) The Reconsideration Committee may choose to consult additional Board support staff.

4. Resolution

- a) The Reconsideration Committee shall review the resource(s) in question and determine whether it conforms to the principles of selection, as outlined in Section B of this Policy, by
 - i) examining the challenged resource;
 - ii) determining acceptance in the professional literature and/or critical reviews;
 - iii) discussing the resource with the individual(s) who questioned it;

- iv) weighing values and faults, and forming opinion based on the resource as a whole rather than on excerpts and passages out of context;
 - v) discussing the resource in the context of the educational program;
 - vi) preparing a written report which shall be retained by the school Principal with copies forwarded to the Supervisor of Program, the appropriate Superintendent of Education, and the complainant, within 45 days of the date of decision of the Reconsideration Committee.
- b) The decision of the Reconsideration Committee shall be effective at the school at which the reconsideration was made. A decision to withdraw or prohibit a learning resource shall be reported to the Director of Education by the appropriate Superintendent of Education. This information would be presented to the Program Committee of the Board for consideration of possible extension for the withdrawal on a system-wide basis. Upon request, the written decision and rationale shall be discussed with the person seeking the reconsideration.
- c) The complainant may appeal the decision of the Reconsideration Committee to the Board, through the Director of Education. In order for the appeal to be considered, it must be filed within 30 days of the issuance of the written report of the Reconsideration Committee. Such appeal is to be heard by the Program Committee of the Board within 30 days of the date on which the appeal is filed, or at its next scheduled meeting.

PROGRAM PROVISION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

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Request initiated by _____

Telephone. _____ Address _____

REPRESENTING

Self _____ Group (give name) _____

Organization (give name) _____

QUESTIONED RESOURCES

BOOK Author _____ Title _____

Publisher _____ Copyright Date _____

NON-BOOK

Type of Media _____
(Magazine, film, filmstrip, record, etc.)

Title _____

Publisher or Producer _____

RESOURCE PERSON

Name _____

Title of talk or reason for being in school _____

Group (if any) the person represented _____

OTHER (please specify) _____

Please respond to the following questions. If sufficient space is not provided, please use additional sheets of paper.

1. How did you learn of this learning resource? _____

2. Did you read (hear, see) this learning resource in its entirety?

If not what parts? _____

3. To what do you object? Please be specific - cite pages, passages, etc.?

4. What do you believe is the purpose of this learning resource in our school?

5. In your opinion, what might result from use of this learning resource?

6. What do you consider are the positive qualities of this learning resource?

7. Are you aware of reviews of this learning resource by professional reviewers or educators? _____

8. For what age group would you recommend this learning resource?

9. What action do you recommend that the school take regarding this learning resource ?

PROGRAM

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