

POLICY

No. E.4

CHALLENGING THE APPROPRIATENESS OF LEARNING RESOURCES

*Adopted: 85-04-09
Amended: 88-01-11
Reviewed: 02-02-11
Amended: 06-06-12
Reviewed: 09-11-10
Amended: 10-12-14
Reviewed: 12-03-13
Reviewed: 13-03-12
Reviewed: 14-05-12
Reviewed: 15-04-13
Reviewed: 16-02-09
Reviewed: 17-01-09
Reviewed: 18-01-08*

Policy

The appropriateness of learning resources used in the schools of the District may be challenged by any resident, employee or student by using the process approved by the Board of Education for this purpose.

Guiding Principles

1. Any resident or employee of the School District may raise objection to learning resources used in a school's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such resources were duly qualified to make the selection, followed the proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selecting learning resources.
2. The Principal should review the selection and objection rules with the teaching staff at least annually. The staff should be reminded that the right to object to learning resources is one granted by policies enacted by the Board of Education.
3. Although it is the learning resources which are challenged, the principles of the freedom to read/listen/view must be defended as well.
4. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
5. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.
6. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

REGULATION

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Regulation

1. Request for Informal Reconsideration

- a. The school receiving a complaint regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue at the school level.
- b. The Principal or other appropriate staff shall explain to the questioner the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.
- c. The Principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the education program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use, or refer the party to someone who can identify and explain the use of the resource.
- d. If the questioner wishes to file a formal challenge, a copy of the District "Selection of Learning Resources" policy, a copy of the District "Challenging the Appropriateness of Learning Resources" policy and a "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form shall be provided by the Principal to the party concerned.

2. Request for Formal Reconsideration of School-Based Resources

a. Preliminary Procedures

- i. Each school will keep on hand and make available "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" forms. All formal objections to learning resources must be made on these forms.
- ii. The "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form shall be signed by the questioner and filed with the Principal.
- iii. The Superintendent of Schools/Secretary-Treasurer shall be informed by the Principal of the formal complaint received.
- iv. The request for reconsideration of materials in school-based collections shall be referred to a reconsideration committee at the school level for re-evaluation of the resource.

REGULATION

b. **The Review of Learning Resources Committee**

Upon receipt of a request for formal reconsideration of a learning resource:

- i. For learning resources in school-based collections, the Principal is responsible for:
 - (a) Forming the Review of Learning Resources Committee. When appropriate, membership should include:
 - one member of the staff of the District chosen by the Superintendent of Schools/Secretary-Treasurer;
 - one member of the school teaching staff chosen by the school staff;
 - one member of the school Parent Advisory Committee chosen by the Committee;
 - one student chosen by the student body (when appropriate).
 - (b) Naming the convener of the Review of Learning Resources Committee.
 - (c) Establishing a meeting date as soon as possible after the complaint is received.
- c. The Review of Learning Resources Committee may choose to consult professional support staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge.
- d. The Review of Learning Resources Committee shall review the challenged resource and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the District's Selection of Learning Resources policy.

3. **Resolution**

- a. The Review of Learning Resources Committee shall proceed within these guidelines:
 - i. Examine the challenged resource.
 - ii. Consider written submissions by community members in a session which includes an opportunity for Committee members to question presenters.
 - iii. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resources.
 - iv. Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.
 - v. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program.
 - vi. Discuss the challenged item with the individual questioner when appropriate.
 - vii. Determine a final recommendation in-camera.
 - viii. Prepare a written report which will include the procedures followed, the minutes of meetings, and the rationale for the decision made by the Committee.
- b. The decision and rationale shall be discussed with the individual questioner and appropriate staff if requested.
- c. The written report shall be retained by the School Principal, with copies forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools/Secretary-Treasurer. A minority report may also be filed.

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- d. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and available for examination by Trustees and appropriate officials only.
- e. The decision of the respective Review of Learning Resources Committee is binding on the individual school.
- f. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this policy, the questioner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Review of Learning Resources Committee to the Board of Education as the final review panel.

Vancouver Island West School District 84

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Initiated by _____

Telephone No. _____ Address _____

Name of School _____

Age or Grade of Student(s) Using the Challenged Material _____

REPRESENTING:

Self _____ Group (Give Name) _____

Organization (Give name) _____

RESOURCE QUESTIONED:

Book:

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher _____

Copyright Date _____

Hardcover _____ or Paperback _____

Non-book:

Type of Resource _____ (Magazine, Film, Filmstrip, Record, etc.)

Title/Name _____

Publisher or Producer (if known) _____

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

1. Did you review the entire item? Yes _____ No _____
If not, what sections did you review?

2. To what do you object? Please be specific:

3. What do you believe is the main idea of this material?

4. What do you feel might be the result of a student using this material?

5. Is there anything good about this material?

6. In your opinion, for what age group would this material be more appropriate?

7. Are there any resources you would recommend to replace this material?

Date: _____

Signed: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL.