

1.0. School Administration

1.A. General

1.A. SELECTION OF STUDENT LEARNING RESOURCES

Adopted: December 16, 2003

Reviewed by Committee: September 2, 2006, January 12, 2016, March 10, 2020

Policy Reference: EL-1.1

Selection of Student Learning Resources

Student learning resources and professional materials for teachers and parents are important components in facilitating student achievement.

Recommended Resources

The Department of Education participates in the process of recommending appropriate student resources through the following:

- Funding to school divisions (Curricular Materials Grant)
- Reviewing and recommending student and other learning resources through both Manitoba and Western Canadian Protocol processes (e.g. Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, etc.)
- Providing the following services and resources:
 - Information on Manitoba, Canadian, and international books and authors
 - Assistance to educators in the use of reference tools
 - Select, catalogue and loan quality learning resources, including novels and plays, to provide a previewing source
 - Produce a support document related to sources for learning resources, including novels and plays, and make it available on the Department's web site
 - Congregating titles used by many school divisions/districts and negotiating bulk pricing from publishers

The Department of Education recommends student learning resources, as well as professional materials for teachers and parents such as:

- Major integrated resources (including multi-component and or multi-media programs) for students with teacher support materials. The major integrated resources include numerous student materials, such as annotated bibliographies of recommended resources
- Stand-alone teacher and parent resources, including professional references which deal with theory and/or practice
- Stand-alone student and teacher reference handbooks such as dictionaries, thesauruses, and writing guides

Stand-alone teacher professional (print and non-print) reference materials for use by teachers and/or parents

- Anthologies for students with supporting teacher materials
- Book collections accompanied by teacher support materials
- Stand-alone video, audio, interactive software, CD-ROMs and/or games for use with students and/or teacher or parents
- Multi-media packages with teacher-support materials

Local Responsibility

Effective 2001, the Department of Education will not be evaluating novels, plays, and picture books for use in schools. The selection of these student learning resources will become a local community/school-based decision. Included are the following:

- Novels
- Audio-visual plays and documentaries
- Autobiographies and biographies
- Trade, chapter, and picture books
- Documentaries
- Related teacher guides

The selection of these student learning resources will become a local community/school-based decision. For guidelines for selection of appropriate resources, see Appendix A.

Procedures for Reconsideration: Challenging Learning Resources

Objections made by parents, teachers, and other members of the community to classroom and/or school library materials are an important part of the democratic process and must be treated as legitimate avenues of communication in education. A written selection procedure provides a rational, unemotional, and systematic reconsideration process to deal with such challenges.

Challenges must be handled with the understanding that no parent or guardian has the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than his/her own. While complaints about materials are being considered, access to the challenged materials or other related materials shall not be restricted.

Should a challenge be sustained, such a decision should not be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of those who originally selected the materials.

1. Informal Reconsideration:

The first stage of the reconsideration process should bring the complainant, the Principal, and other designated instructional personnel together at a mutually agreeable time, and in an informal setting where opinions and information can be freely exchanged.

After hearing the concerns about the material, the Principal and other appropriate instructional staff will provide explanations about the materials in question. Such explanations may include the purpose of learning resources in the school's curriculum, the criteria used in selection and the relationship of this particular item to the purpose and criteria for selection.

If the explanations are satisfactory to the complainant, the reconsideration process will terminate at this stage. If the explanations are unsatisfactory to the complainant, other options may be considered.

If this meeting does not arrive at a resolution that is satisfactory to all concerned parties, the complainant may launch the formal reconsideration process.

Any decision to withdraw a learning resource shall be reported to the Superintendent/CEO and shall automatically launch the formal reconsideration process.

2. Formal Reconsideration:

Formal reconsideration may be instituted by the submission of a "Request for Formal Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form to the school Principal when the informal process is not satisfactory to all concerned parties and/or when any decision to withdraw a learning resource is elected.

Reference: Forms 8.0

A) The Reconsideration Committee:

1. Structure:

Upon receipt of a formal request for reconsideration, the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent/CEO, will establish a reconsideration committee. This committee should consist of the following representatives (other than the original complainant):

- A Principal who will act as the non-voting chair;
- Two Teachers conversant with the material in question;
- A Librarian or designated instructional staff;
- Two parents/guardians from the community or one student in place of a parent/guardian;
- A Trustee.

2. Function:

The reconsideration committee shall:

- Examine the challenged resource;
- Study critical reviews of the resource;
- Weigh strengths and weaknesses based on the resource as a whole and not on passages or sections in isolation;
- Consult division support/staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge;
- Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program with the person(s) responsible for the selection of the resource;
- Discuss the challenged item with the complainant;
- Decide whether the item should be retained or removed from the collection in questions;
- Prepare a written report.

1. **Reports:**

The chair shall discuss the written report with the complainant.

Written reports will be retained by the Superintendent/CEO and a copy will be kept on file by the Principal of the specific school. A minority report may also be filed. The reports shall be available for examination upon request.

The decision of the reconsideration committee is binding only for the individual school.

Any decision to withdraw a learning resource shall be reported through the Superintendent/CEO to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

3. **Appeals:**

Notwithstanding any procedure outlines in this document the complainant shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Reconsideration Committee to the Board of Trustees as the final review panel.