

ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC S.R.D. NO. 41	CODE: HIBDA – Policy
LEGAL REFERENCES: <i>School Act, Sec. 44</i>	TITLE: School Library – Challenge of Learning Materials
CROSS REFERENCE:	ADOPTION DATE: 1 st Reading – June 17, 2010
	REVISION DATE:

Employees, students or parents/guardians may challenge learning resource materials used in jurisdiction schools.

ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC S.R.D. NO. 41	CODE: HIBDA - Guidelines
LEGAL REFERENCES: <i>School Act, Sec. 44</i>	TITLE: School Library – Challenge of Learning Materials (Page 1 of 8)
CROSS REFERENCE:	ADOPTION DATE: 1 st Reading – June 17, 2010
	REVISION DATE:

1. The Board is legally responsible for the selection of materials purchased with public funds, other than those recommended by Alberta Education.
2. The 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 learning resources materials.
3. The basic principles of the freedom to read, listen and view shall be defended.*
4. No parents have the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than for their own children.
5. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
6. The major criterion for the final decision shall be the appropriateness of the material for its intended use.

* *Freedom to Read Statement* of the Learning Resources Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association

"Intellectual Freedom comprehends the right of every individual to have access to all expressions of knowledge and creativity. This basic right requires that students be granted freedom to read as an integral part of their education. Because students require practice in handling the freedom to read, it becomes the responsibility of the professional educators to make available material representing the widest range of interests, so that students may freely explore the world of ideas, be they popular or unpopular."

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Upon receiving a complaint concerning a learning resource, there are three stages in dealing with the challenge: Informal, Formal, and Appeal. A satisfactory resolution of the complaint may occur at any point in the process.

1. Informal Reconsideration

If a complaint is made, an attempt is to be made to resolve the matter informally at the school level.

- a. The principal/designated staff member shall
 - Listen to the nature of the challenge
 - explain the guiding principles involved in the selection of learning resources and the manner in which the learning resource in question is utilized in the school; OR,

The principal may form a committee of the principal/designate, teacher/teacher-librarian and a parent from the community to reach a decision on the resource. The principal/designate shall discuss the decision with the parent.

- b. An individual parent may submit a written request to the principal to restrict access to his/her child of a given learning resource.
- c. If unresolved at this stage, proceed to Formal Reconsideration **

2. Formal Reconsideration

- a. The complainant may pursue a formal reconsideration, by completing a “Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource” form and forwarding it to the principal.
- b. The principal shall forward copies of the completed “Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources” form to the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services.

ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC S.R.D. NO. 41	CODE: HIBDA - Procedures
LEGAL REFERENCES: <i>School Act, Sec. 44</i>	TITLE: School Library – Challenge of Learning Materials (Page 3 of 8)
CROSS REFERENCE:	ADOPTION DATE: 1 st Reading – June 17, 2010
	REVISION DATE:

- c. The request for reconsideration shall be referred to a Reconsideration Committee composed of:
 - i. The Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services
 - ii. The principal
 - iii. The Division Teacher-Librarian or school library staff
 - iv. One parent or member of the community chosen by the principal
 - v. Student representation at the discretion of the principal
- d. The Reconsideration Committee shall examine the challenged learning resource. Two checklists may be used for completing this procedure. They are:
 - i. Reconsideration of Learning Resources – Non-fiction
 - ii. Reconsideration of Learning Resources – Fiction and Other Literary Forms

3. Resolution

- a. Allow time for the Reconsideration Committee to meet and review to the complaint form, the item in question, critical reviews of the resource, and any other pertinent information.
- b. When appropriate, discuss the challenged item with the individual complainant to clarify the basis of the challenge
- c. Form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on words, passages, or sections taken out of context
- d. Reach a decision.
- e. Inform the parent of the Division's decision.

ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC S.R.D. NO. 41	CODE: HIBDA - Procedures
LEGAL REFERENCES: <i>School Act, Sec. 44</i>	TITLE: School Library – Challenge of Learning Materials (Page 4 of 8)
CROSS REFERENCE:	ADOPTION DATE: 1 st Reading – June 17, 2010
	REVISION DATE:

4. Appeal

The complainant may appeal any decision of the Reconsideration Committee, directly to the Superintendent of Schools.

Definition of terms

Instructional resources are those resources selected by the teacher for student use.

Curriculum resources are those resources used by teachers in preparation for teaching.

Learning resources are those resources available in school libraries.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A LEARNING RESOURCE

Title of work _____

Author/Supplier/Publisher _____

Date of Resource _____ Type of material _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

Complainant represents:

_____ himself/herself _____ (Name of organization or group)

Name of School _____

Age and grade of student using challenged material _____

1. Did you read, view, or hear the entire work? _____

If not, which parts did you read/view/ or hear?

2. What is the basis of your concern? Please be specific; cite pages or sections.

3. Is there anything of value in this work?

4. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing or using this work?

5. For what age group, if any, would you recommend this work?

6. What do you believe is the theme of this work?

7. Are you aware of any critic's judgment of this work? _____

8. What would you prefer the school to do about this work?

____Do not recommend or assign it to my child ____Withdraw it from all students

Date _____

Signature of Complainant

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A LEARNING RESOURCE
NON-FICTION**

Checklist for Reconsideration Committee

Suggested procedure:

Each member of the Reconsideration Committee completes for and then shares responses at the reconsideration meeting. Once the members have discussed their reactions to the resource, then the complaint is considered.

Title _____

Author _____

A. Purpose

1. What is the overall purpose of the learning resource? _____

2. Is the overall purpose accomplished? ____Yes ____No

B. Authenticity

1. Is the author competent and qualified in the field? ____Yes ____No

2. What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field? _____

3. Is the material current? ____Yes ____No

4. Are information sources well document? ____Yes ____No

5. Are translations and retellings faithful to the original? ____Yes ____No

C. Appropriateness

1. Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of EICS schools? ____Yes ____No

2. Is t appropriate to the level of instruction intended ____Yes ____No

3. Are the illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels? ____Yes ____No

D. Content

1. Is the content of this material well presented by providing adequate scope, range, depth, and continuity? ____Yes ____No

2. Does the material present information not otherwise available? ____Yes ____No

3. Does this material give new dimension or direction to its subject? __Yes __No

E. Reviews

1. Source of review _____

Favourably reviewed _____ Unfavourably reviewed _____

2. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids? _____

Additional Comments _____

Recommendation by Reconsideration Committee _____

Date _____ Signatures (Committee) _____

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A LEARNING RESOURCE
FICTION AND OTHER LITERARY FORMS**

Checklist for Reconsideration Committee

Suggested procedure:

Each member of the Reconsideration Committee completes form and then shares responses at the reconsideration meeting. Once the members have discussed their reactions to the resource, then the complaint is considered.

Title _____

Author _____

A. Purpose

1. What is the overall purpose, theme, or message of the learning resource?

2. Is the overall purpose/theme/message accomplished? ___Yes ___No

3. Does the resource appeal to a child's imagination? ___Yes ___No

4. Potential readers: Is it suitable for children? ___Yes ___No

Is it suitable for young adults? ___Yes ___No

If both are marked no, for what age group would you recommend it? _____

5. Will the reading and/or viewing and/or listening to this resource result in a greater understanding of human actions and deeds? ___Yes ___No

6. Does the resource offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, and problems of various minority groups?
___Yes ___No

7. Are there any questionable elements in the resource? ___Yes ___No

If yes, please specify: _____

If yes, are these elements and integral part of a worthwhile theme or message? ___Yes ___No.

B. Content

1. Does the resource present a realistic picture of life for that particular time frame? ___Yes ___No

2. Does the story avoid an oversimplified view of life, one which leaves the reader with general feeling that life is sweet and rosy, or ugly and meaningless? ___Yes ___No

- 3. If factual information is part of the story, is it presented accurately?
___Yes ___No
- 4. Are there concepts presented that are appropriate to the ability and maturity of the potential reader? ___Yes ___No
- 5. Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live? ___Yes ___No
- 6. Is the material offensive in any way in its presentation of either the chief character or any of the minor characters? ___Yes ___No
- 7. Is there preoccupation with sex, violence, cruelty, brutality, and aberrant behavior that would make this material inappropriate for children?
___Yes ___No
- 8. If there is use of offensive language,
is it appropriate to the purpose of the text for children? ___Yes ___No
for young adults? ___Yes ___No
If yes, is it an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message? ___Yes ___No
- 9. Are there derisive names or epithets that are offensive ___Yes ___No
If yes, are these an integral part of a worthwhile theme or message?
___Yes ___No
- 10. Is the material well written or produced? ___Yes ___No
- 11. Does the story offer an opportunity to better understand human behavior without stressing differences of ethnicity, age, class, education, gender, religion or philosophy in any adverse way? ___Yes ___No
- 12. If a "classic" resource, does it make a significant contribution to the history of literature or ideas? ___Yes ___No
- 13. Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste? ___Yes ___No N/A
- 14. Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story? ___Yes ___No N/A

Recommendation by Reconsideration Committee

Date _____ Signatures (Committee) _____

