PEACE WAPITI
PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
Educating Today for Success Tomorrow

POLICY HIAC – School Literary Materials

The Board recognizes and respects the right and responsibility for schools to provide developmentally appropriate literary materials for students to access that can positively impact their mental health and well-being. The Board also encourages intellectual inquiry through the provision of learning resources representing a wide range of interests so students may freely explore the world of ideas to develop and expand their own perspective and imagination.

PURPOSE

In the selection of resources, the Division expects sound professional judgment. The Division recognizes, however, that parties with a vested interest in the school may object to the selection of resources and, therefore, authorizes the appeal process established through the procedures below.

DEFINITIONS

Classroom collection means a teacher's collection of literary materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, whether in physical or electronic form, that are selected, curated or managed by the teacher for use by or available to children or students in the teacher's classroom.

Member of the school community means any of the following individuals who may request a school authority to review school literary materials:

- a child or student enrolled in the school,
- a school authority employee,
- a parent of a child or student enrolled in the school,
- a member of the school council,
- any member of the community with a direct connection to the school.

School literary materials means any materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, whether in physical or electronic form, that are accessible or available to children or students at a school.

Sexual act means an activity or action of a distinctly sexual nature, as defined by the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*.

Visual depiction means a visual or graphic representation, such as a drawing or painting, an illustration, a photographic or digital image or a video file.

GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

1. The principal, as instructional leader of the school, is responsible for the approval and review of instructional, curriculum and learning resources, and school literary materials:

   a) The literary materials in a school's collection are to:

i) Encourage a wide range of perspectives and ideas, foster critical thinking, and foster the acquisition of knowledge and skills.
ii) Encourage a wide variety of perspectives and ideas.
iii) Provide variety for students as they seek to gain an understanding of curricular outcomes.
iv) Cause students to critically examine the information in the materials in support of curriculum to encourage student to reason logically, examine different points of view and through these processes develop skills associated with arriving at sound student judgments.
v) Represent a diversity of worldviews and perspectives.
vi) Be reviewed to ensure compliance with these standards.

b) Selection of school literary materials will consider:
- Age appropriateness.
- Link and support to curricular outcomes.
- Enrichment of learning that transfers.
- Readability and popular appeal.
- Honour and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans (Section 16(1)(f)).
- The academic credibility of the author/producer.
- The literary merit of the work.

c) "The school authority must ensure that school literary materials containing any explicit visual depiction of a sexual act are not accessible or available to children or students in a school, and must ensure that no such school literary materials are selected for inclusion in a school library, unless such materials are for information or reference, such as technical materials, dictionaries or encyclopedias, that are not narrative in nature" (Ministerial Order #034/2025);

d) A teacher may maintain their own classroom collection based on the following criteria:

i) Literary materials in the classroom collection comply with Sections 1.a., 1.b., & 1.c.

ii) Parents/Guardians of the students who have access to a classroom collection can request information regarding what is contained in their child's specific classroom collection. This can be achieved by inviting parents to view classroom collections during events open to parents such as meet the teacher and parent student conferences, providing a picture of titles and authors, or by providing a list of titles and authors contained in the collection, should the teacher choose to do so.

2. Neutrality and Common Values in Resource Selection

In accordance with the Ministerial Order 034/2025, the selection and use of all school literary materials and non-prescribed education programming must adhere to the following standards of neutrality and intellectual diversity:

- Respect for Common Values: All selected resources must honour and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans.
- Intellectual Diversity: Materials must encourage a wide range of perspectives and ideas, allowing students to explore diverse worldviews without the school adopting a singular ideological stance.
- Critical Thinking: Resources shall be chosen to foster critical thinking and the acquisition of knowledge, ensuring students can examine different points of view and develop sound independent judgments.

3. Respectful Environments: All materials must promote understanding and respect for others and support a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours. The school will maintain a publicly available listing of all school literary materials on their website (with the exception of those contained in a classroom collection, see 1.d. ii). Despite care taken to select appropriate school literary materials, objections may arise. Members of the school community may request that the school authority review specific literary materials that may contain explicit visual depictions of a sexual act , unless such materials are for information or reference, such as technical materials, dictionaries or encyclopedias, that are not narrative in nature.

   a) If the literary material is challenged, the procedures are as follows:

      i) The member of the school community wishing to request a review or removal of school literary material shall bring it to the attention of the principal.

         (1) In the event that a member of the school community wishes to appeal the principal's decision, the community member shall submit copies of the proposed material to be removed and the written request (Exhibit 1) to the Superintendent.

         (2) Upon receipt of Exhibit 1, the Superintendent or designate will review the request and respond to the member of the school community.

REFERENCES

Cross References:

Exhibit 1 – Request for Review, Change the Access or Availability of, Reconsideration or Removal of Specific School Literary Materials

Legal References:

Education Act Section 16, 33(1)(a.3)
An Act to Remove Politics and Ideology from Classrooms and Amend the Education Act (Bill 25)
Ministerial Order #034/2025
Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*

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