



CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/MATERIALS

Background

Alberta Education established provincial policy to deal with controversial issues. Included in their policy guidelines is a recommendation that Divisions establish local procedures regarding the identification and treatment of controversial issues and materials in the classroom.

Procedures

1. For sound judgments to be made, information regarding controversial issues is to:
 - 1.1 Represent alternative points of view.
 - 1.2 Appropriately reflect the maturity, capabilities, and educational needs of the students.
 - 1.3 Reflect the requirements of the course as stated in the Program of Studies.
2. Parents may request, in writing, the exclusion of their child(ren) from formal instruction or activities dealing with a particular controversial issue.
3. Parents have the right to formally challenge the use of a particular instructional resource on the grounds of sex, racial, ethnic, or cultural stereotyping, or offensiveness to community standards.
4. When offering programs that are controversial in nature, the Principal is responsible for:
 - 4.1 Reviewing program content and materials to ensure conformity to Board policies and Division administrative procedures;
 - 4.2 Communicating to parents the nature of the program, content, resources and informing parents of their right to exclude their children from certain program elements.
 - 4.3 Ensuring that staff are adequately in-serviced to ensure effective program delivery; and
 - 4.4 Ensuring that alternative learning activities are provided for excluded students.
5. In the event of a parental challenge to the use of a particular learning resource:
 - 5.1 A meeting will be arranged between the parent and the teacher to discuss the nature of the concern.
 - 5.2 If the issue cannot be resolved at the classroom level, a meeting will be arranged with the principal to discuss the nature of the concern.



- 5.3 If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, the Principal will advise the parent of their right to challenge the use of the resource through the Office of the Superintendent

Reference: Section 11, 18, 32, 33, 41, 52, 53, 58, 58.1, 58.2, 196, 197, 222 Education Act
Alberta Bill of Rights
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, Constitution Act, 1982
Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12
Bill 44, Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Amendment Act