Selection of Learning Resources

Background

School boards are required to use either Ministry recommended learning resources or those approved through a district process. The District recognizes that a variety of learning resources are required to address diversity in the classroom. Students learn best when they are actively involved in their own learning, and when the instructional program is adapted to their individual needs, learning styles and interests.

Definitions

Learning resources are texts, videos, software, and other materials that teachers use to assist students to meet the expectations for learning defined by provincial or local curricula. Before a learning resource is used in a classroom, it must be evaluated and approved at either the provincial or local level. Evaluation criteria may include curriculum fit, social considerations, and age or developmental appropriateness.

Provincially Recommended Learning Resources are print and non-print materials that have been selected, reviewed and approved by B.C. educators in collaboration with the B.C. Ministry of Education according to a defined set of criteria. They are typically materials suitable for student use but may also include information primarily intended for teacher use.

Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium (ERAC) is an association of B.C. public school districts overseen by an Executive Committee and working together on software, video and learning resource acquisition and evaluation. All ERAC evaluated resources are considered to be Board authorized resources.

Procedures

1. Responsibility of District and School Staff in the Selection of Learning Resources

    1.1   The responsibility for the selection of learning resources rests with the Superintendent, or designate, and other professional staff employed by the Board.

    1.2   The Superintendent, or designate, and principals/vice principals are responsible for ensuring this selection process is known and applied.

    1.3   Under the direction of the Principal or designate, each school is expected to establish a consultative process for the selection and acquisition of learning resources.

2. Criteria for the Selection of Learning Resources

    2.1   Learning resources will support the provincially prescribed curricula and be consistent with guidelines and criteria established by the Ministry of Education, and outlined in the document: Evaluating, Selecting and Managing Learning Resources: A Guide (2002).

    2.2   Learning resources will be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of the students for

whom the materials are selected.

2.3 Biased or slanted learning resources may be provided to meet specific intended learning outcomes (for example, to recognize propaganda and its purpose in a given context or to balance an argument).

2.4 The selection of learning resources on controversial issues will be directed towards maintaining a balanced collection representing various views so that students may have an opportunity to develop, under guidance, the practice of critical analysis and making informed judgment in their daily lives.

2.5 Donated materials will be judged by the same criteria as new resources.

2.6 Selection is an ongoing process that includes the culling of materials that are no longer appropriate to curricular needs.

3. Request for District Recommendation of a Resource

3.1 The Director(s) of Instruction and/or Assistant Superintendent will consider and review requests for resource recommendations.

4. Challenges to the Use of Recommended Resource and/or District Approved Resource

4.1 Concerns regarding the use of Recommended learning resources should first be addressed, and if possible resolved, at the school or district level.

4.2 Where a district process is warranted, the Superintendent will convene a review committee comprised of the Superintendent or designate, an administrator, a teacher, a member of a Parent Advisory Council, and a student where appropriate.

4.3 The Superintendent or designate shall chair the committee.

4.4 The committee shall refer to Ministry guidelines, ERAC recommended resource lists, District Electronic Information Systems Acceptable Use Guidelines, and any other related policies or procedures to make its decision.

4.5 Concerns regarding the use of Recommended learning resources that cannot be resolved locally are referred to the Ministry. Challengers must complete the Inquiry into the Suitability of a Learning Resource form (PDF, 3.51MB) and submit it directly to the Ministry.

4.6 The Ministry will acknowledge the challenge and refer it to the Educational Resource Advisory Committee. Based on the Committee's recommendations, the Ministry's actions may include cautions to teachers, communications with publishers, and/or withdrawal of Recommended status for materials deemed inappropriate for school use.

4.7 Information regarding any cautions or withdrawal is communicated to districts. Challengers receive an individual response informing them of actions taken, with a copy to the district superintendent.