

Controversial Learning Resources

Policy No. 304.7R

REGULATIONS

FORM: 304.7F – Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form

1. The district school receiving a challenge regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue internally. For the purpose of these regulations, reference to individuals means parents/guardians of students enrolled in a district school and groups affected are those teachers/Principals/Vice Principals employed by the Board.
 - 1.1. The Principal/Vice Principal and other appropriate staff shall explain to the challenger the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resource.
 - 1.2. The Principal/Vice Principal or other appropriate staff shall explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use.
 - 1.3. The Principal/Vice Principal shall also make the following points clear:
 - No parent/guardian has the right to determine reading, viewing or listening matter for students other than their own.
 - However, the board recognizes the right of the individual parent/guardian to request that his/her child not have access to a given item, provided a written request is made to the appropriate Principal/Vice Principal.
2. If the challenger wishes to file a further complaint, a copy of the District policy, Selection of Learning Resources, and a copy of the form "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" shall be provided by the Principal/Vice Principal to the party concerned.
 - 2.1. All formal objections to learning resources must be made on a Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form, signed by the challenger, and filed with the Principal/Vice Principal.
 - 2.2. The school Principal/Vice Principal shall forward one copy of the Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form to the Superintendent of Schools.
 - 2.2.1. Copies of the Request for Reconsideration will be forwarded to all affected individuals/groups.
 - 2.3. The Superintendent of Schools may, at his/her discretion, establish a reconsideration committee to re-evaluate the resource and to prepare a report with recommendations.
 - 2.3.1. The committee shall consist of a minimum of five members and shall include representation from the following groups: district staff, teachers (at least two), Principal/Vice Principal, parents/guardians (at least two), and students if the committee deems it appropriate.
 - 2.4. The Superintendent of Schools shall review the reconsideration committee report and advise all individuals/groups of his/her decision.

- 2.5. If the Superintendent of Schools decides against the establishment of a reconsideration committee, the challenger may make a written appeal to the Board of Education to have a committee established as stated in 2.3.
- 2.6. Individuals/groups affected shall have the right to appeal to the Board of Education for a final review and should do so under *Bylaw 302.16*.
- 2.7. In cases where an appeal for a final review has been approved by the board, the following principles will be adhered to:
 - Sufficient time will be provided for trustees to fully acquaint themselves with the challenged material(s).
 - At the first opportune meeting of the Board, after approval of the appeal, trustees will hear from both sides of the issue.
 - The decision of the Board shall be final.

3. Controversial Learning Resource - School Libraries

If an objection is made to an item presently included in a school's library or District Resource Centre learning resources collection, the procedures to be followed, sequentially, are:

- 3.1. The school librarian should give the complainant a hearing, should explain the selection procedures in use, and should make the following points clear:
 - No parent/guardian has the right to determine reading, viewing or listening matter for students other than their own.
 - However, the board recognizes the right of the individual parent/guardian to request that his/her child not have access to a given item, provided a written request is made to the appropriate Principal/Vice Principal or the Superintendent of Schools.
- 3.2. Should the complainant continue to feel there are grounds to challenge the material then he/she should formally present that challenge on the form "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources."
- 3.3. Upon receipt of the form, the librarian should inform the appropriate school Principal/Vice Principal and/or the Superintendent of Schools of its submission.
- 3.4. The librarian, the Principal/Vice Principal, if applicable, and the Superintendent of Schools, shall jointly decide upon the advisability of temporarily removing the material from the shelves while the challenge is in process.
- 3.5. A school's review committee, comprising the school's Principal/Vice Principal, librarian, teacher (or teachers), and one or more members of the school's parental community shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Schools. The committee shall proceed according to the following guidelines:
 - Examine material being challenged;
 - Examine reviews of the material; and,
 - Form opinions on the suitability of the item based on the material as a whole and not on passages or section taken out of context.

- 3.6. The committee shall confer with both the librarian and the complainant and explain its findings.
- 3.7. Should the complainant or librarian wish to continue the challenge, a report of the committee's findings together with the form "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" shall be forwarded to the School Board Office.
- 3.8. The final decision of acceptability shall rest with the Board of Education.