

## **Administrative Procedure 251**

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### **CHALLENGE TO LEARNING/ LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS RESOURCES**

#### **Background**

Black Gold School Division is dedicated to offering students a diverse array of materials and media formats, spanning various difficulty levels, appealing to different interests, and reflecting multiple perspectives.

Occasional objections may be made regarding the suitability of learning materials or resources, including those in the library learning commons. When this happens, the following procedure will be implemented.

#### **Procedures**

1. The Division is responsible for selecting materials purchased with public funds other than those recommended by Alberta Education (refer to Appendix - Library Learning Commons Resources).
2. The decision to sustain a challenge will not necessarily be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility by 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 will 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 will not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
6. The final decision's major criterion will be the material's appropriateness for its intended use.
7. Upon receiving a complaint concerning a learning resource or library learning commons material, there are three (3) stages in dealing with the challenge: Informal, Formal, and Appeal. A satisfactory resolution of the complaint may occur at any point in the process. The item in question will remain in circulation until a decision is reached.
8. Informal Reconsideration
  - 8.1 If a complaint is made, an attempt is to be made to resolve the matter informally at the school level.
  - 8.2 The Principal or designate will:

- 8.2.1 Listen to the nature of the challenge.
- 8.2.2 Explain the guiding principles involved in the selection of learning resources and how the learning resource in question is utilized in the school.
- 8.2.3 If the material has been deemed inappropriate and the Principal decides to remove the item, Form 251-1, Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources is to be completed and the title recorded using the Challenged Material Tracking Form. The Principal or designate will discuss the decision with the parent.
- 8.3 An individual parent may submit a written request to the Principal to restrict access to his/her child of a given learning resource.
- 8.4 If unresolved at this stage, proceed to Formal Reconsideration.

## 9. Formal Reconsideration

- 9.1 The complainant may pursue a formal reconsideration by completing Form 251-1 - Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource and forwarding it to the Principal. The form must be completed in its entirety to be considered.
- 9.2 The Principal will forward copies of the completed Form 251-1 - Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources to the Associate Superintendent - Learning Services.
- 9.3 The request for reconsideration will be referred to a Reconsideration Committee composed of:
  - 9.3.1 The Principal,
  - 9.3.2 The Division Librarian
  - 9.3.3 One (1) parent or member of the community chosen by the Principal,
  - 9.3.4 Student representation at the discretion of the Principal.
- 9.4 The reconsideration Committee will examine the challenged learning resource based on the information included in the Reconsideration of Learning Resources Form
- 9.5 The Reconsideration Committee will:
  - 9.5.1 Be allowed time to meet and review the questioned material, weigh its value and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole and not on passages taken out of context.
  - 9.5.2 Discuss whether the material follows the guidelines outlined in the selection policies for instructional learning and/or library learning commons resources.
  - 9.5.3 Investigate background information on the material, professional reviews, and availability in other school libraries.
  - 9.5.4 When appropriate, discuss the challenged item with the individual complainant to clarify the basis of the challenge.
  - 9.5.5 Reach a decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint notification.

- 9.5.6 Inform the complainant of the Committee's decision. Decisions may recommend alternative reading or viewing for the child of the concerned party, withdrawal of the material from use in the school, relocation of the item, or continued use of the material.

## 10. Appeal

- 10.1 The complainant may appeal any decision of the Reconsideration Committee directly to the Superintendent.
- 10.2 Materials that have successfully withstood a challenge in BGSD may not be challenged again. The decision from the initial challenge will apply throughout the division and be documented in the Challenged Material Tracking Form

### 10.3

Reference: Section 3, 18, 32, 33, 41, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 Education Act  
Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12

Form: 251-1 Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource