

# Selection of Learning Resources Guidelines and Procedures



*School District 54's (Bulkley Valley) mission statement is  
"To empower all learners to live the challenges of a diverse and  
changing world."*

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## **Chapter 1 – Guidelines**

### 1.1 Scope of this Document

This document applies to all educators who are responsible for the selection of learning resources. School District 54’s mission is to support the principles that guide the selection of resources.

### 1.2 Philosophy

Our School District 54 Bulkley Valley **mission** is to empower all learners to live the challenges of a diverse and changing world. Our **vision** is for every individual to feel valued and for all learners to reach their potential.

In achieving our mission and vision, we live our **values**. The Board of Education of School District 54 has committed to five Core Values: Compassion, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Fairness. We support life-long learning. We celebrate our many cultures and seek ways to appreciate and embrace diversity such that every learner feels safe and welcome within our schools. We value the ability of all learners to set high expectations for themselves, and we are committed to supporting all learners in achieving personal success.

#### 1.2.1 Intent

“The intent is not to remove controversy or over-protect students' exposure to these issues. But rather, it is to flag controversial views and opinions so that you can engage your students in critical thinking and discussions, and prepare teaching strategies accordingly. And, depending on the age of your students and the subject matter, you may decide to notify parents in advance of using a particular resource, so that they are aware and able to discuss this with their child(ren).” *(SD42, 2015)*

### 1.3 Statement Regarding Intellectual Freedom

School District 54 endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) statement on intellectual freedom: The Canadian Federation of Library Associations recognizes and values the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as the guarantor of the fundamental freedoms in Canada of conscience and religion; of thought, belief, opinion, and expression; of peaceful assembly; and of association. The Canadian Federation of Library Associations supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which include the interlocking freedoms to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

In accordance with these principles, the Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms that all persons in Canada have a fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly. Only the courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada. *(CFLA, 2015)*

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#### 1.4 Selection of Learning Resources

##### 1.4.1 Objectives of Selection

The primary objective of learning resources is to support, enrich, and help to implement the educational program of the school through the interaction of educators and other members of the school community. It is the responsibility of educators to provide students with a wide range of learning resources in a variety of formats, at varying levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal, with the presentation of different points of view, and that meet curricular objectives.

It is the responsibility of educators to include:

- Resources to enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students served in each particular school.
- Resources to stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards.
- Resources to enable students to make informed judgements in their daily lives.
- Resources to represent the diversity and inclusivity of the Canadian population, recognizing each group's contributions to our society.
- Resources to represent global diversity, created by authors and illustrators of all cultures.
- Resources selected through a cooperative, ongoing process, which may include input from other educators and students.
- Recommended lists.

##### 1.4.2 Considerations for Review of Learning Resources

Educators should consider the following when evaluating materials as possible learning resources:

###### *Authenticity*

- Does the resource incorporate accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources?
- Is the material up-to-date?
- Are translations and retellings faithful to the original?
- Is Indigenous content authentic? (Contact the SD54 Indigenous Education Department)

###### *Appropriateness and Quality of Content*

- Does the content enhance a student's understanding and perspective?
- Is the content appropriate for the subject area, and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development of the students for whom the materials are selected?
- Does the content support Canadian, Indigenous or global perspectives?
- Does the content represent differing viewpoints on controversial issues?
- Does this material meet curricular needs?
- Does this material meet the needs and varied interests of the student population?
- Is the length of the material suitable?
- Is the language of presentation accessible to students?
- Is the commercialization of the resource (if any) reasonable, or does it overwhelm the content?

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*Organization of Content*

- Is the content presented logically and clearly?
- Is the presentation of the content suitable for learning?
- Is the content sufficiently comprehensive to be useful?
- Is there extraneous or unnecessary material?
- Are there titles, labels or captions, and are they appropriate?

*Other Considerations*

- Does the resource meet high standards in literary, artistic, and aesthetic quality?
- Does the resource meet high standards in technical aspects and/or physical format?
- Does the resource earn favorable reviews in standard reviewing sources? (See Appendix D.)
- Does this material keep an existing series up to date?
- Does this resource balance cost with need?

See **Administrative Procedure 6.175-2** for more information on learning resource selection criteria.

It is recommended that educators complete the free online **FOCUSED Learning Resources Selection Training** course, available at: <https://focusedresources.ca/en/course-selecting-learning-resources-classroom>

*1.4.3 Sources for Resources, Reviews and Recommendations*

There is a variety of sources for print and online resources, as well as for reviews and recommendations. See SD54 teacher-librarians for further resources and recommendations.

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## Chapter 2 – Challenge Procedure

### 2.1 Challenge Principles

Any parent/guardian of a student in the School District 54 may challenge learning resources on the basis of appropriateness. However, it is understood that no parent/guardian has the right to restrict access to learning resources for students other than their own children.

It is also understood that in situations such as the Library Learning Commons, it is impossible to review all resources in their entirety.

If books meet criteria laid out in this document, but do not meet criteria for a family, these books won't be removed from the Learning Commons, but alternative options could be suggested for families, book by book.

Although if any resource is challenged, the principles of the freedom to read/listen/view must be defended as well.

Access to challenged resources shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.

The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the resource for its intended educational use.

A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgement of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the resource.

### 2.2 Challenge Procedure

The SD54 procedure for challenging learning resources begins with an informal reconsideration procedure. If no informal resolution is possible, the second step is a school-based formal reconsideration procedure. If there is still no resolution, the third step is an appeal at the District level.

#### *2.2.1 Request for Informal Reconsideration*

The school receiving a complaint from a questioner regarding a learning resource will try to resolve the issue informally, following this procedure:

1. The questioner sets up an appointment to meet with administrator, Teacher Librarian and the staff member using the learning resource at a mutually agreeable time.
2. The staff member may decide to invite an additional staff member to the meeting (recommended).
3. The staff member explains the learning resource selection procedure to the questioner.
4. The staff member explains role of the resource in the educational program.
5. The staff member and the questioner attempt to come to an informal resolution to the challenge.
6. If there is no informal resolution, and the questioner wishes to file a formal challenge, the following documents are provided to the questioner:

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- The *SD54 Selection of Learning Resources – Guidelines and Procedures* document (this document).
  - The *Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources* form (Administrative Procedure 6.175-2).
7. The questioner begins the formal reconsideration process, detailed below in.

### *2.2.2 Request for Formal Reconsideration*

The school receiving a formal complaint from a questioner regarding a learning resource will follow this procedure to resolve the issue:

1. The questioner completes and signs the *Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources* form.
2. The staff member reads and signs the form, and files the form with the principal.
3. The principal informs the Assistant Superintendent for the school that a formal complaint has been received.
4. A school-based Reconsideration Committee – made up of the staff member using the resource, an administrator and the Teacher Librarian is formed.
5. The Reconsideration Committee reviews the challenged resource, using the following guidelines:
  - Examine the challenged resource.
  - Consider the written submissions by the questioner.
  - Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resource.
  - Discuss the challenged resource, and weigh values and faults.
  - Discuss the challenged resource with the questioner when appropriate.
  - Determine whether the challenged resource conforms to the selection guidelines outlined in the *SD54 Selection of Learning Resources – Guidelines and Procedures* document.
  - Determine a final recommendation in camera.
6. The Reconsideration Committee prepares a written report that includes:
  - The procedures followed.
  - The minutes of meetings.
  - The rationale for the decision made by the Reconsideration Committee.
7. The Reconsideration Committee discusses the decision and rationale with the questioner.
8. The Principal retains the written report, and sends a copy to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent for the school.

*Note:* The decision of the Reconsideration Committee is binding on the individual school.

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*2.2.3 Appeal to the District*

If the questioner is not satisfied with the school-based Reconsideration Committee decision, the questioner may appeal the decision at the District level as per the District Appeal Process, starting with *Step 3*.

See *Figure 1* (next page) for a visual description of Challenge Procedure workflow.



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Figure 1 – Challenge Procedure Workflow

