



Category:	EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL
Policy:	EDUCATION PROGRAM
Approved Date:	616
Revised Date:	Committee Mtg Jan 24/2001
	Working Policy June 11, 2001
	January 15, 2010
	May 16, 2017
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EDUCATION PROGRAM: SELECTION OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Policy 616

Rationale

Effective July 1, 2016, independent school authorities are required to have policies and procedures on how learning resources are chosen for use in schools. The learning resources requirement is authorized under the authority of the Independent School Act, section 4(1)(b).

The Ministry of Education no longer conducts evaluation processes to recommend learning resources, leaving the responsibility to the school authority. This policy sets out the procedures that determine how learning resources are chosen, as well as how concerns or challenges will be addressed by CISPG.

Definition of Learning Resources

Learning Resources are texts, videos, software, online resources, and other instructional materials that teachers use to assist students to meet the requirements for learning defined by the BC Ministry of Education and CISPG.

Learning Resources Policy

Learning resources used in the classroom will be evaluated and approved with due consideration given to curriculum fit, pedagogy, social considerations, age and developmental appropriateness, as well as the vision, mission, and values of CISPG.

Learning Resources Approval Process

CISPG requires teachers to utilize core education media that have been formally evaluated before being used in the classroom.

This evaluation process involves one or more of the following:

- Approval by ERAC (Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium)
- Review by at least two school representatives: the Principal and a practicing teacher with at least three years' experience, preferably in grade level and subject area for which the resources are to be used
- At the discretion of the Superintendent, review by CISP representative(s) of common learning resources and materials used in CISP schools
- Review by the Office of the Bishop of core resources related to Faith Formation in CISP

The evaluation criteria used in determining appropriate learning resources for the classroom will include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting the vision, mission and values of CISP
- Supporting the learning standards of the BC curriculum and the educational goals of the province, the diocese, and the school
- Addressing developmental and age appropriateness
- Having effective instructional and technical design
- Assisting students in making connections between what they learn in school and its practical application in their lives
- Encouraging understanding and promoting positive social attitudes and respect for diversity and individual differences in British Columbia, Canada, and the world
- Meeting the requirements set by copyright and privacy legislation

There is an expectation that supplemental materials used in the classroom also support the above criteria.

Learning resources should be periodically reviewed (at least after five years) to ensure continued relevance, currency, and availability.

Challenge to the Use of Recommended Learning Resources

Challenges to the use of recommended learning resources must be made in writing to the Principal identifying the learning resource and stating the reason why the resource(s) may not be suitable (see Appendix A - Inquiry Into Suitability of a Learning Resource). Challenges will only be accepted from individuals in the school community whose children are directly engaged with the learning resource(s), educators who use the resource(s) or Ministry of Education staff.

Within 14 days of written receipt of a learning resource challenge, the Principal will convene a meeting of a committee consisting of a minimum of three representatives. The committee will include the Principal, a CISPG designate and a practicing teacher. The practicing teacher must have at least three years of experience in the grade level(s) and subject area(s) for which the resource is used.

The committee will:

- Examine the challenged resource
- Read at least one critical review of the resource, when available
- Form a professional opinion based on the resource as a whole, rather than passages or selections taken out of context
- Discuss the challenged resource in the context of CISPG values, the BC curriculum, and local context
- Make a recommendation in writing

Based on the committee's recommendation, the school/CISPG may dismiss the challenge, raise the awareness of the implications of using the resource with the teaching staff, communicate with the publisher and/or withdraw the recommended resource from further use in the school/diocese.

The individual issuing the challenge will be notified of the committee's decision in writing within 14 days of the decision.

Sources of Learning Resources

CISPG Schools are encouraged to use the services of the Education Resource Acquisition Consortium (ERAC) to assist them in choosing or approving learning resources. ERAC's Evaluated & Approved K-12 Resource Collection is an online, searchable compilation of resources evaluated by BC educators for use in classrooms: <http://www.bcerac.ca/k12-resources/>

Other Sources: United Library Services