



FISA Independent School Resources Policy Template

The following Learning Resources Policy Template is provided as a service to FISA member schools. The template includes several italicised sections where school authorities may wish to suggest a process that is more suitable for their school. There may be other sections, such as the number of individuals that the authority has on its resources review committee, that may also be altered according to the needs of each school authority. School authorities should insert their school name into all instances where the template references *School ABC*.

FISA would like to thank the representatives from each of the five member associations who developed this policy on behalf of independent schools in British Columbia:

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Learning Resources Policy – *School ABC*

A. Introduction

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, s 4(1)(b) which states:

On application by an authority, the inspector must issue or renew a certificate classifying an independent school into one or more of the groups set out in the Schedule if the inspector is satisfied that the authority and the independent school meet (b) the educational standards established by the minister, and

Section 4 of the Ministerial Order 41/91, the Education Standards Order.

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 *School ABC*.

B. Definition of Learning Resources

Learning Resources are texts, videos, software, and instructional materials that teachers use to assist students to meet the expectations for learning defined by provincial and local curricula.

This policy is specific to learning resources which form the core program collection of resources.

Learning resources used in the classroom will be evaluated and approved by *School ABC* with consideration given to curriculum fit, pedagogy, social considerations, age and developmental appropriateness, as well as the school authority's philosophical, cultural and/or religious values.

C. Learning Resources Approval Process

School ABC will encourage teachers to utilize education media that have been formally evaluated before being used in the classroom. The evaluation process involves a minimum of two school authority representatives, one of whom is a practicing teacher with at least three years' experience, preferably in grade level and subject area for which the resources are to be used. The recommended scope of professional learning resources for review include Primary (Gr K-3), Intermediate (Gr 4-6), Middle (Gr 7-9) and Secondary (Gr 10-12). (Note: Schools may establish their professional learning resource categories differently, such as K-7, 8-12 which should replace those listed above.)

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

- Supporting the learning standards and outcomes of the curriculum
- Assisting students in making connections between what they learn in school and its practical application in their lives
- Addressing developmental and age appropriateness
- Having effective instructional and technical design
- Meeting the requirements set by copyright and privacy (PIPA) legislation
- Suitability based on the pedagogical, social, philosophical, cultural and/or religious values of *School ABC*.

Evaluating resources from the perspective of pedagogical, social, philosophical, cultural and/or religious values will:

- encourage understanding and promote positive social attitudes and respect for diversity and individual differences
- ensure that BC students will see themselves and their life experiences, within a free, pluralistic, and democratic society and evidenced in the learning materials they use in their classroom

- identify potential controversial or offensive elements that may exist in the content or presentation, and highlight where resources might support positive social attitudes, diversity, and demonstrate tolerance and respect for individual differences.

Resource evaluation will be based on one or more of the following inclusion criteria:
(schools will adjust criteria accordingly)

- age
- multiculturalism and diversity
- accessibility
- beliefs and values
- cultural attributes
- socio-economic factors
- humour
- ethical and legal considerations
- language
- course content, skills, and competencies
- respect for individual differences
- violence
- social responsibility
- democratic principles
- service learning
- pedagogical perspectives

D. Authority Approval

The Board of Directors will approve resources used by School ABC which then become recommended resources for a five-year period unless they are withdrawn. The authority may continue to use the learning resources after five years if the authority grants an extension of an additional five-year period.

Learning resource approval is confirmed by a motion(s) passed by the *School ABC* Board of Directors. (Note: *School authorities may decide on an alternate confirmation process which should be documented here*)

E. Withdrawal of a Recommended Learning Resource

Learning Resources will maintain a recommended status for five years, after which continued status will be subject to, but not limited to, criteria such as curriculum relevance, currency, and availability.

The recommendation of withdrawal will be made by a committee of at least two representatives of *School ABC*, one being a practicing teacher with at least three year's experience preferably in grade level and subject area for which the resources are used. The



recommended scope of professional learning resources review will be Primary (Gr K-3), Intermediate (Gr 4-6), Middle (Gr 7-9) and Secondary (Gr 10-12). (*See note for Section C*)

A learning resources withdrawal will be confirmed by a motion passed by the *School ABC* Board of Directors. (*See note for section D*)

F. Challenge to the Use of Authority Recommended Learning Resources

Challenges to the use of authority recommended learning resources must be made in writing to the (principal/superintendent/head of school), identifying the learning resource and stating the reason why the resource(s) may not be suitable. 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 (Pr/S/H of S) will convene a meeting of a committee, consisting of a minimum of three representatives of *School ABC*, one of whom must be an administrator and another 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.

Based on the committee's recommendation, the authority 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.

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

G. Sources of Learning Resources

School ABC may use the services of the Education Resource Acquisition Consortium (ERAC) to assist them in choosing or approving learning resources.
(List other sources used by *School ABC*. Ex. Online list of resources, Open Education Resources, Textbook Publishers, etc.)

Approved by the FISA Board of Directors, March 24, 2017