

Greater Essex County District School Board

Guidelines for the Selection/De-selecting of School Library (Learning Commons') Resources

1.0 INTRODUCTION

School Library (Learning Commons') resources play an integral role in supporting student learning outcomes by ensuring an inclusive learning environment.

The school library (Learning Commons') provides a portal to the world of information and knowledge for all students from K-12. Resources should contain a wide selection of materials and formats at varying levels of difficulty that are reflective of diversity and multiple points of view.

The purpose of this guiding document is to provide direction and standardized procedures for the selection, reconsideration, and de-selection of school library (Learning Commons') resources at the school level.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

While the Principal is ultimately responsible for all materials used in the school, the selection and de-selection of school library (Learning Commons') resource materials will normally be delegated to the Teacher Librarian who will seek input and assistance from the Central office where appropriate.

3.0 SELECTION

3.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The selection of school library (Learning Commons') resources aligns with the Board's obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code and adheres to the principles set out in the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy and Regulation. The selection of books requires that the above principles the principles of inquiry and discovery of contemporary issues be placed above personal taste to ensure a high quality and comprehensive collection reflective of the lived experience of all students. To this end, school library (Learning Commons') resources are selected to:

- Create a richly diverse and inclusive inventory in which all students' identities are reflected, supported and affirmed, with particular emphasis on identities that experience societal marginalization;
- implement, enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students served;
- increase knowledge, develop an appreciation of literature, and nurture an interest in research, recreational reading and lifelong learning;
- reflect various perspectives on issues relevant to contemporary life and culture so that students may have an opportunity to develop, under guidance, the practice of critical analysis and the skill to make informed judgments in their daily lives;
- foster responsible and knowledgeable global citizens through the provision of resources that reflect both local and global issues, contexts and communities; and,
- support Canadian school library resources where appropriate.

While literary works should generally not convey messaging that is hateful, stereotypical or promote prejudice or discrimination learning resources that document or recount such messaging or events may be included to meet specific curriculum or learning objectives. For example, learning resources may depict historical and contemporary issues in order to aid the understanding of social, economic and political tensions or challenges. Learning resources will be selected for their strengths and will not be automatically included or excluded from the collection based solely upon content of language or topic. Books that are accessible to students should not convey a message that is hateful or discriminatory, promoting prejudice or stereotypes.

3.2 SELECTION CRITERIA TO BE UTILIZED INCLUDE

- Connection to the Strategic Priorities of the Board
- Connection to Curriculum
- Suitability for Students (Age Appropriate)
- Accuracy of Information
- Free from bias and stereotypes
- Relevance
- Student Interest
- Organization/Style/Aesthetic qualities
- Physical characteristics (durability)
- Cost/Cost-effectiveness

3.3 SELECTION TOOLS

To ensure a high-standard collection, it is highly recommended that resources be selected from a variety of publishers and that professional selection tools such as review journals, book lists, and reading programs be utilized to identify potential resources for selection.

Reliable selections tools include, but are not limited to:

Reading programs and prize-winning book lists:

Ontario Library Association [Forest of Reading Program](#)

Canadian Library Association [Book Awards](#)

Governor General's [Literary Awards](#)

Giller Prize

Canada Reads

American Library Association [Caldecott Medal](#)

American Library Association [Newbery Medal](#)

Pacific Northwest Library Association [Young Reader's Choice Awards](#)

(also see Review Journals for 'Best of' booklists)

Review Journals:

[CM: Canadian Review of Materials](#) (Manitoba Library Association)

[Resource Links](#) (Connecting Classrooms, Libraries and Canadian Learning Resources)

[School Library Journal](#)

[Teacher Librarian](#)

[Voya \(Young Adult\)](#)

3.4 DONATIONS/GIFTS

The same selection criteria will be applied to donations and gifts as when purchasing new materials. Materials will be accepted or rejected based on these criteria.

4.0 REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY (LEARNING COMMONS) MATERIAL(S)

The Greater Essex County District School Board acknowledges the interests of parents/guardians, students, teachers, teacher librarians, administrators and community members in the school library (Learning Commons') resource collections. Specific objections to school library (Learning Commons') materials will be treated as an important part of the democratic process. Discussions and activities surrounding the resolution of questions and/or concerns will be held in a manner that:

- a) Centres to the principles set out in 3.1
- b) Is respectful of all parties involved in the dialogue.
- c) Understands that no parent/guardian has the right to determine reading, viewing, or listening matter for students other than their own.
- d) Is based on the principles of freedom of information and inquiry. As such, it is recognized that value lies in the general material itself, not individual passages and parts pulled out of context, and that the faults and benefits should be weighed against one another and then based on the whole.
- e) Reflects the spirit embodied in the [Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom](#) and [IFLA Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom](#)

When controversy arises, a formal procedure will be followed. While complaints about materials are being considered, access to the challenged materials or other related materials will not be restricted in any manner.

4.1 REQUESTS FOR FORMAL RECONSIDERATION

- a) Questions or concerns, whether verbal or in writing, should be directed to the Principal and/or Vice-Principal of the school.
- b) The Principal and/or Vice-Principal will provide a copy of the selection procedure and selection criteria and explain the intended use and/or purpose of the resource.
- c) If the questions or concerns remain, the individual(s) expressing the concern will be provided the option to pursue a formal request for reconsideration.
- d) Request for Reconsideration of School Library (Learning Commons') Resources form (Appendix A) must be completed and signed by the individual(s) expressing the concern and filed with the Principal.
- e) The Principal will forward the signed form to the Superintendent responsible for school libraries.
- f) The Superintendent responsible for school libraries will share the form with the *Committee to Review Requests for Reconsideration of Resources in the School Library (Learning Commons)*. This committee will consist of the Teacher Consultant for School Libraries, the Teacher Consultant for Equity, the Library Coach and the Superintendent responsible for school libraries.

g) The committee will meet to discuss the material and will prepare a response on the material along with their recommendation(s). The Superintendent responsible for school libraries will prepare a letter to the complainant copies to the Principal identifying the decision(s) made.

h) The decision may be appealed in writing to the Director of Education.

5.0 DE-SELECTION (WEEDING)

De-selection, or weeding, is the removing of materials from the school library (Learning Commons') collection in a systematic and deliberate way. It is a planned and thoughtful action so that accessible learning resources are current, accurate, comprehensive, reflect the scope and purpose of the school library (Learning Commons') resource collection, and are aesthetically appealing.

However, the de-selection process must also be accomplished with sensitivity. Professional standards and criteria must be balanced with an understanding of the school library (Learning Commons') role in the school community, the needs and demands of its users, the availability of online and digital resources to supplement tangible resources, the need to maintain a collection that reflects multiple perspectives, and the resources available at the school level. Space and design considerations may also play a part in determining the size and emphasis of the school library (Learning Commons') resource collection.

5.1 CRITERIA TO BE UTILIZED

Objective Criteria

- Exceeds target copyright date for standards of currency (see Appendix B for suggested targets)
- Low or no circulation rate (see Appendix B for suggested circulation standards)

Physical Condition

- Pages torn
- Book covers torn—or not repaired appropriately
- Ragged bindings, poorly repaired bindings

Content Evaluation

- Out-of-date
- Trivial subject matter or approach to subject matter
- Inaccurate information (misinformation is worse than no information!)
- Newer editions available
- No longer supports curriculum
- Not used for reference
- Unneeded duplicate
- Discriminatory Bias, depicts inappropriate stereotypes
- Interest or reading level inappropriate for student body

5.2 DISPOSAL OF DE-SELECTED MATERIAL

Materials that have been de-selected from the library collection will be disposed in an environmentally conscious manner through the support of Media Services.



APPENDIX A – Request for Reconsideration of School Library (Learning Commons') Resources

Initiated by (Name):

Address:

Preferred Contact Number(s):

Name of School:

I am making this request on behalf of:

RESOURCE TO BE RECONSIDERED

Is the material or resource a:

Book/Printed Material:

Digital Resource:

Other (please specify):

Title/Name:

Author:

Copyright Date:

Edition:

Publisher:

Additional Information:

Please respond to the following questions. If there is not sufficient space, feel free to use additional sheets of paper.

1. Did you review the entire resource? If not, what portions did you review?

2. What do you object about this material? Please be as specific as possible and provide page numbers if appropriate.

3. What do you believe is the main purpose of this resource?

4. What do you feel might be the result if a student reads or uses this resource?

Signature:

Date:

To be filled out by receiving school:

Received by:

Principal Signature:

Date:

School Name:

Received by:

Superintendent Responsible for School Libraries:

Date: