Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR531

Title: **SELECTION AND REVIEW OF LEARNING RESOURCES**

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Authorization: Executive Council

1. RATIONALE

The Selection and Review of Learning Resources Procedure (the "Procedure") supports the implementation of the Accountability for Student Achievement Policy (P040) and is aligned with the Use of Copyright Protected Works Policy (P079), Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Policy (P088), Human Rights Policy (P031), Equity Policy (P037), Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards and the Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum 170: School board communication with parents and Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks.

This Procedure supports all TDSB staff in selecting and reviewing learning resources using specific criteria and professional judgment. It also outlines how to address inquiries and concerns regarding a learning resource.

2. OBJECTIVE

- To outline the requirements and process for selecting and reviewing learning resources.
- To establish a framework for responding to inquiries and concerns about learning resources, including requests for reconsideration.

3. DEFINITIONS

Deselection: Identification and removal of items that are in poor or unhealthy condition, contain inaccurate information, display unacceptable bias, remain uncirculated, or are replaceable with newer materials that encourage students to choose them.

Educator: Classroom-based instructional staff, which includes but is not limited to Teachers, Early Childhood Educators (ECE), Child and Youth Workers (CYW), and Professional Support Services staff.

Learning Resources: Any print or non-print materials, including a variety of audio-visual and digital materials, used by educators and students for formal or informal teaching and/or learning purposes.

Parent: Parent, guardian or any other caregiver legally recognized as acting in place of the parent.

Professional Judgement: Judgement that is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, methods of instruction and assessment, and the criteria and standards that indicate success in student learning. In professional practice, judgment involves a purposeful and systematic thinking process that evolves in terms of accuracy and insight with ongoing reflection and self-correction. (Source: Growing Success)

Requestor: The person(s) within the TDSB communities who have brought the concern forward.

School Library Collection: A curated collection of print, digital, and other materials that have been intentionally selected and regularly evaluated to meet the school community's needs, catalogued, organized, managed, and evaluated on an ongoing basis by a teacher-librarian. In the TDSB technical support for library collections is provided by Library Technical Services.

TDSB: Toronto District School Board, also referred to as the "Board".

Textbook: A comprehensive learning resource that is in print or electronic form, or that consists of any combination of print, electronic, and non-print materials collectively designed to support a substantial portion of the Ontario curriculum expectations (greater than 85%) for a specific grade and subject in elementary school or for a course in secondary school, or a substantial portion of the expectations for a learning area in the Ontario Kindergarten program. Such a resource is intended for use by an entire class or group of students.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director, Student Learning & Equitable Outcome

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all TDSB staff, third-party service providers, parents/guardians/caregivers, partners, volunteers, and students of the Board.

6. PROCEDURE

6.1. VETTING LEARNING RESOURCES: SELECTION

Resource selection is a complex process that requires professional judgment, considering the resource, the students, its impact on the students, its use in the learning environment, and the learning conditions.

6.1.1. The primary objectives of resource selection are to support:

(a) authentic student engagement with resources relevant to their learning and interests, fostering critical thinking skills, and competencies that lead to academic success and personal growth;

(b) the development of responsive, inclusive, equitable, and anti-oppressive learning environments; and

(c) the Ontario Curriculum, TDSB and Ministry policies, TDSB priorities, and legal requirements.

6.1.2. The selection of learning resources is an ongoing process that involves reviewing, ordering, maintaining, and deselecting both new and existing materials to meet the evolving needs of learners and educators. This process ensures that resources remain relevant, effective, and aligned with educational goals and standards.

(a) There is not a central list of approved resources.

6.1.3. The principal is accountable for all materials used in the school. This includes digital resources and tools.

(a) The principal can delegate the responsibility of selecting and deselection learning resources for the library collection to the teacher librarian.

6.1.4. Educators are responsible for selecting and reviewing print and non-print learning resources that meet student and school community needs. Educators will:

(a) establish the context and conditions for the use of the learning resource;

(b) preview (reading, watching, discussing, etc.) the learning resource being considered for use; and

(c) select learning resources using the criteria specified in this Procedure.

6.1.5. Selecting Textbooks

(a) Schools should use the Ministry of Education's Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks and the accompanying Trillium List when selecting textbooks.

(b) Educators should use their professional judgment and knowledge of curriculum and students when selecting and using textbooks from the Trillium List.

6.1.6. Selecting Resources for Learning Experiences, Classroom and Library Collections

(a) When developing classroom or library collections, learning resources will be considered individually and within the context of the entire collection.

(b) The collections will cover various topics and formats, serving the community more broadly than those chosen for specific learning experiences.

(c) The collections will reflect diverse identities, lived experiences, interests, and learning needs, considering all curricula, differentiated resources, and the recreational reading interests of the entire school community.

(d) All donations of learning resources will be reviewed against the criteria specified in this Procedure. See the Donation of Learning Resources (Appendix A) for more details.

6.2. SELECTION CRITERIA

6.2.1. Educators will consider each of the following criteria when selecting any print or non-print learning resource. See the *TDSB Resource Selection and Review Guide* for more details on each criterion.

(a) Affirming and Reflecting Student Identities and Experiences;

(b) Accessibility, Relevance, and Engagement for Students and Program;

(c) Nature and Degree of Bias;

(d) Compliance with Legislation and Alignment with Curriculum and TDSB Priorities and Policies;

(e) Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) Perspectives and Production; and

(f) Canadian Perspectives and Production.

6.2.2. Educators will consider all criteria for each resource, recognizing that not all resources will meet every criterion.

6.3. Digital Resources and Tools

6.3.1. Principals and educators will consider the selection criteria in this Procedure (section 6.2.1.) when selecting and using digital resources and tools.

6.3.2. Licensing Additional Digital Learning Tools

In accordance with Purchasing Policy (P017) and Cyber Risk and Security Procedure (PR725), when looking to license additional paid or free digital tools, principals and educators should follow this process:

(a) Prioritize using TDSB-licensed and supported digital tools.

(b) If none meets the school or system needs, submit a Digital Learning Tool Evaluation Request through ServiceIT for review by the Digital Learning Tool Evaluation Committee within 6-8 weeks. Part one of the request focuses on curriculum, pedagogy, and TDSB priority alignment.

(c) If the review is successfully completed, a Privacy and Security Risk Assessment will be initiated to evaluate potential risks, data ownership, and retention and to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the digital tool.

(d) If the Privacy and Security Risk Assessment is successfully completed, the tool will be licensed and included in the TDSB-licensed and supported digital tools list.

(e) Formulate a technical implementation plan that aligns with equitable access and leverages existing technology.

(f) To comply with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA), a Notice of Collection and Use of Personal Information notification is required.

Principals do not have the authority to accept terms and conditions or enter into contracts for digital learning tools on behalf of TDSB.

Principals must follow the chart below to ensure compliance with TDSB policies and proper authorization for agreements with external organizations and online contracts.

	Central Department	**Local Schools**
Signature Type	Electronic	Electronic
Approval Authority required	System Executive Superintendent	Executive Superintendent of Schools
Signing Authority required	System Executive Superintendent	Executive Superintendent of Schools
Privacy and Security Risk Assessment	IT Services and Freedom of Information Department	IT Services and Freedom of Information Department
Technical Implementation Plan	Centrally Assigned Principal	School Principal
Notice of Collection and Use of Personal Information	IT Services	School Principal

6.4. CONCERNS ABOUT A LEARNING RESOURCE

6.4.1. Schools may receive concerns about learning resources used in classes or available in libraries. An initial response in good faith often leads to an amicable resolution, with most concerns resolved at the school level.

6.4.2. Principals will address concerns through conversations with the requestor, emphasizing the TDSB's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, equity, and combatting hate, racism, and oppression.

6.4.3. Principals will engage in the following process to review learning resources:

   (a) Acknowledge the concern within two calendar days.

   (b) Clarify the concern with the requestors, using the *TDSB Resource Selection and Review Guide.*

   (c) Confer with the teacher-librarian and other educator(s) for additional context.

   (d) Convene a local school committee if needed, using the *TDSB Resource Selection and Review Guide.*

   (e) Consult with Central Departments (e.g., Library and Learning Resources, Urban Indigenous Education Centre, Human Rights Office, Equity, Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression) or Superintendent, if needed.

   (f) Evaluate how resolutions may impact the delivery of the Ontario Curriculum and the Board's commitments to human rights and equity.

   (g) Make a decision and take action(s).

   (h) Inform the requestor of the decision and share this Procedure.

   (i) Retain all documents and communication.

6.5. REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

6.5.1. If concerns persist, requestors may submit the Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource Form (531A) to the principal, who will forward it to the local school Superintendent.

   (a) Upon receipt of Form 531A, the Superintendent of the local school will then convene a Learning Resource Review Committee.

   (b) If multiple schools are involved, the Executive Superintendent will convene the Learning Resource Review Committee.

   (c) Learning Resource Review Committee

- The Learning Resource Review Committee should include TDSB staff members with diverse experiences, identities, and responsibilities relevant to the concern and resource.

- The convening Superintendent will chair the Learning Resource Review Committee, which must include Library and Learning Resources staff and may include other TDSB staff from:

    (i) Subject area department(s);

    (ii) Administration and staff at the affected school(s);

    (iii) Urban Indigenous Education Centre and/or Indigenous Elders;

    (iv) Human Rights Office;

    (v) Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Department;

    (vi) Research and Development Department; or

    (vii) Other departments depending on the nature of the concern.

6.5.2. Learning Resource Reconsideration Process

(a) The Learning Resource Review Committee will:

- establish the committee's operational framework and terms;
- review the resource in its entirety, considering the work as a whole and not only portions that may be taken out of context;
- review all information related to the resource including critical reviews, curriculum connections, and any other contexts;
- consider the Promising Practices in Indigenous Education, and TDSB's human rights and equity policies and procedures in the review process;
- make recommendations considering their impact on human rights, and equity commitments, and the implementation of the Ontario Curriculum;
- identify schools and departments that may be impacted by the recommendations related to the resource; and
- assign lead roles and responsibilities for implementation and monitoring the recommendations, as needed.

(b) The learning resource will remain in classrooms or libraries during the reconsideration process.

6.5.3. Learning Resource Review Committee Recommendations

(a) The Chair of the Learning Resource Review Committee will submit a written report with recommendations, rationale, and a list of departments and schools impacted by the recommendations to Executive Council for approval.

(b) A summary of the final report will be sent to the requestor, all committee members and all departments and schools potentially impacted by the decision.

6.5.4. Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting

(a) The Library Learning Resources Department will:

- maintain a record of challenged resources, decisions, and actions taken; and
- support ongoing professional learning on this Procedure.

7. EVALUATION

This Procedure will be reviewed as required but at a minimum every five (5) years.

8. APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Donation of Learning Resources Guide
- Appendix B: Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource (Form 531A)

9. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislation
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA)
- Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards

Policies
- Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources (P088)
- Accountability for Student Achievement (P040)
- Equity (P037)
- Fair Dealings (Copyright) (P079)
- Human Rights (P031)
- Purchasing (P017)

Procedures
- Cyber Risk and Security (PR725)

Other Documents:
- Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools
- Ministry of Education Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks, 2002
- Policy/Program Memorandum 170: School board communication with parents
- *TDSB Resource Selection and Review Guide*

Donation of Learning Resources

Principals must follow this process to ensure all donations of learning resources are appropriate, align with TDSB policies, and enhance student learning.

Submission Request	- Donations are submitted to the Educational and Business Partnerships Department (EBP) at businessdevelopment@tdsb.on.ca for initial consideration. - The EBP department will share "The Best First Step" message for donors to complete an In-Kind Donation Form.
Initial Assessment	- When EBP receives a completed In-Kind Donation application, they will review the application. - EBP will complete an Initial Partner Assessment and background check. - EBP will forward the request to the relevant subject-specific department for an academic review of the resources.
Academic Assessment	- The subject-specific department(s) conduct(s) a preliminary review to ensure the donation aligns with the Ontario Curriculum, the TDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, policies, and procedures. - Once the review is complete, the request is forwarded to the Library and Learning Resource (LLR) department at professionallibrary@tdsb.on.ca to facilitate communication with the schools.
Local School(s) Need	- The LLR team gather initial feedback from schools on the proposed learning resources. - The LLR team then shares the resource along with this procedure with interested schools for a comprehensive review.
Local School(s) Assessment	Schools undertake a thorough review of the proposed resource, evaluating it against the criteria specified in this procedure (sections 6.1 – 6.2). This comprehensive assessment ensures that the resource meets the necessary standards and aligns with the educational goals and policies of the TDSB.
Final Determination	- Schools make the final determination whether to accept the donation of the learning resource. - Schools can directly request the resource from the donor if they choose to proceed. - If schools require assistance in accessing the resource, the LLR team is available to provide support.

Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource

Complete this form thoroughly and send it, with relevant attachments, to the school principal.

Request for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource Form	
Resource Information (title of work, author, publisher, date of publication, format)	
Requestor Information (name, address, telephone, email)	
If the requestor represents a group, specify the name of the group.	
Have you (or all group members) reviewed the entire work?	
Are you a parent, student, or staff member within the Toronto District School Board?	
Have you discussed your concern with a TDSB educator or administrator? If so, please share the details and the outcome.	
What are your concerns about the material?	
Are there any parts of the material that are acceptable to you? Please explain.	
What impact might this work have on you or your child/children?	
What would be a satisfactory solution? Why?	
Do you have other comments you wish to make?	