

PCS Learning Resources Policy

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. The goal is that school authorities evaluate resources from the perspective of pedagogical, social, philosophical, cultural and religious values, in order to: 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.

This policy sets out the procedures that determine how learning resources are chosen, as well as how concerns or challenges will be addressed by Pacific Christian School.

B. Definition of Learning Resources

This policy is specific to learning resources which form the core program collection of resources that are viewed as central, necessary or required for courses.

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.

Core learning resources used in the classroom will be evaluated and approved by the Superintendent or Campus Principals of Pacific Christian School 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

Pacific Christian School administrators will ensure that the core learning resources utilized by teachers have been formally evaluated before being used in the classroom. The evaluation process will involve a minimum of two school representatives, one of whom is a practicing teacher with at least three years' experience, preferably in the grade level and subject area for which the resources are to be used. The recommended scope of professional learning resources for review include Elementary (K-7) and Secondary (8-12).

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
- Being developmentally and age appropriate
- Having effective instructional and technical design
- Meeting the requirements set by copyright and privacy (PIPA) legislation
- Being suitable to the pedagogical, social, philosophical, cultural and religious values of Pacific Christian School.

Resource evaluation will be based on one or more of the following inclusion criteria:

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

D. Authority Approval

The Superintendent or Campus Principals of Pacific Christian School will approve resources used by the school 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.

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 for withdrawal will be made by a committee of at least two representatives of Pacific Christian School, one being a Director of Teaching and Learning, and the other being a practicing teacher with at least three years' experience preferably in the grade level and subject area for which the resources are used. The recommended scope of professional learning resources review will be Elementary (K-7) and Secondary (8-12).

A learning resources withdrawal will be confirmed by the Superintendent or Campus Principal(s).

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 Superintendent or Principal(s) 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 Superintendent or Principal will convene a meeting of a committee, consisting of a minimum of three representatives of Pacific Christian School, one of whom must be an administrator and another a practicing teacher. The practicing teacher should 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

Pacific Christian School may use the services of the Education Resource Acquisition Consortium (ERAC), the Society of Christian Schools in BC, or other professional educational organizations to assist them in choosing or approving learning resources.

Original Approved by the VCES Board of Directors, May 23, 2017