

## Administrative Procedure 250

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# LEARNING COMMONS

## Background

A Learning Commons is a flexible, collaborative, and faith-inspired environment that integrates print, digital, and human resources to support optimal student learning and formation.

Grounded in the Catholic understanding that all truth and knowledge ultimately point to God, the Learning Commons cultivates curiosity, critical thinking, ethical digital citizenship, and the development of lifelong learners who are active contributors to society.

A vibrant Learning Commons:

- Supports the parameters outlined in the [Ministerial Order #034/2025 on Student Learning](#);
- Provides equitable access to culturally responsive, diverse, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate texts and materials consistent with the [Provincial Resource Review Guide](#);
- Cultivates curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and ethical digital citizenship;
- Builds a welcoming and inclusive space for all Students, including newcomers, multilingual learners, and Children and Students with diverse needs;
- Reflects the Division's Catholic Identity and Portrait of a Graduate competencies.

## Definitions

Child/Children means an individual or group of individuals younger than 6 years of age who is/are enrolled in an early childhood services program within the Division.

Classroom Collection means a teacher's collection of literary materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, whether in physical or electronic form that are selected, curated or managed by the teacher for use by or available to Children or Students in the teacher's classroom.

Challenge Process means the formal process by which a Child, Student, parent, staff member or community member may raise a concern about a resource in the Learning Commons.

Learning Commons is a learning space available to Children, Students and staff that provides access to curated resources, technologies, expertise and flexible spaces that foster inquiry, creativity and community.

Resource Selection means the process of curating learning materials, print, digital, multimedia, manipulatives and technology based on pedagogical value, developmental appropriateness, equity and alignment with our Catholic faith and curriculum expectations.

School Literary Materials means any materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, including Classroom Collections, whether in physical or electronic form that are accessible or available to Children or Students at a school.

Sexual Act means an activity or action of a distinctly sexual nature including but not limited to:

- i. Masturbation, including touching of a person's own genitals or anus with a hand, finger, artificial sexual organ or other substitute for a sexual organ;
- ii. Penetration of the penis into the vagina or anus;
- iii. Contact of a sexual nature between the genitalia, mouth, hand, finger or other body part with the unclothed genitalia, pubic area, buttocks, anus, or if the person is female, the breast of another person;
- iv. Ejaculation onto or into another person; or,
- v. The use of artificial sexual organs or substitutes for sexual organs on the clothed or unclothed genitalia, pubic area, buttocks, anus, or if the person is female, the breast of another person;

but does not include an activity or action that is not distinctly sexual in nature, such as physical contact related to medical conditions, examinations or treatment, actions or activities related to biological functions or processes like puberty, menstruation, pregnancy or breastfeeding, or actions or activities that may be related to sexual acts, such as kissing or handholding.

Student means a person who is enrolled in a Division school but does not include a child younger than 6 years of age who is enrolled in an early childhood services program.

Visual Depiction means a visual or graphic representation, such as a drawing or painting, an illustration, a photographic or digital image or a video file.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Child and Student Responsibilities**

#### **1.1 Children and Students shall:**

- 1.1.1 Respect the Learning Commons space, staff, and all resources;
- 1.1.2 Use Learning Commons and Classroom Collection resources ethically, including acknowledging copyright, intellectual property, and licensing requirements; and,
- 1.1.3 Engage as responsible ethical digital citizens, following [Administrative Procedure 140 - Responsible Uses of Division Information Technology Resources](#) and [Administrative Procedure 351 - Student Code of Conduct](#).

## 2. Teacher Responsibilities

### 2.1 Teachers shall:

- 2.1.1 Integrate Learning Commons resources into instructional planning and assessment to support curriculum-aligned knowledge, skills, competencies and literacy development across subject areas;
- 2.1.2 Collaborate with school staff to support Child and Student inquiry, literacy, numeracy and competency development.
- 2.1.3 Model and explicitly teach the responsible, ethical, and discerning use of information and technology, integrating Catholic values when evaluating sources, ideas, and media;
- 2.1.4 Notify parents of the content of Classroom Collections as directed by the Principal and in accordance with Division requirements;
- 2.1.5 Ensure that all Classroom Collections materials comply with section 2(a) of Ministerial Order #034/2025; and,
- 2.1.6 Identify and communicate potential Sensitive Content within Classroom Collections to the Principal prior to use, including materials that may require additional review, parental notification or Ministerial approval.

## 3. Principal Responsibilities

### 3.1 The Principal shall:

- 3.1.1 Ensure the Learning Commons provides a comprehensive and current collection of resources that:
  - 3.1.1.1 Comply with section 2(a) of Ministerial Order #034/2025 insofar that School Literary Materials containing any explicit visual depiction of a sexual act are not accessible or available to Children or Students in a school, and that no such School Literary Materials are selected for inclusion in the Learning Commons, unless such materials are for information or reference, such as technical materials, dictionaries or encyclopedias that are not narrative in nature;
  - 3.1.1.2 Support curriculum-aligned knowledge, skills, and competencies;
  - 3.1.1.3 Promote literacy, numeracy, inquiry, innovation, and creativity;

- 3.1.1.4 Represent diverse worldviews and perspectives, consistent with the Division mission, vision and Catholic teachings, that and demonstrate the Division's commitment to equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and reconciliation;
  - 3.1.1.5 Demonstrate pedagogical value, accuracy, and where relevant, literary merit and author/producer credibility; and appropriate literary or informational merit;
  - 3.1.1.6 Support accessibility and diverse learning needs; and,
  - 3.1.1.7 Are reviewed annually to ensure that School Literary Materials meet the criteria as outlined in AP 250 for compliance with this Administrative Procedure and the [Provincial Resource Review Guide](#).
- 3.1.2 Ensure an up-to-date inventory of resources is maintained and available to parents upon request;
  - 3.1.3 Ensure that the parents, Children or Students who have access to a Classroom Collection are informed of the School Literary Materials contained specifically in the Classroom Collection through appropriate communication methods such as classroom visits, newsletters, or digital platforms;
  - 3.1.4 Provide opportunities for parents, Children, Students, and community members to raise concerns regarding the appropriateness of resources and ensure those concerns are addressed through the Challenge Process;
  - 3.1.5 Ensure that resources dealing primarily and explicitly with gender identity, sexual orientation, or human sexuality are used only in accordance with Ministerial approval requirements, parental notification, and opt-in procedures; and,
  - 3.1.6 Oversee the removal of materials that no longer meet selection criteria or are in poor condition.
4. Division Responsibilities
- 4.1 The Division shall:
    - 4.1.1 Establish and communicate criteria, procedures and professional learning to ensure that resource selection, management, and Challenge Processes align with the [Provincial Resource Review Guide](#) and Ministerial Order #034/2025; and,
    - 4.1.2 Provide tools, templates and professional learning to support teachers and Principals in applying consistent, equitable, and developmentally appropriate resource selection practices.
5. Challenge Process for Learning Commons Resources

## 5.1 Informal Reconsideration

- 5.1.1 Any Child or Student enrolled in a school, staff member, parent of a Child or Student enrolled in a school, member of the school council, or member of the community with a direct connection to the school (the “applicant”) may request that a Principal review, change the access to or availability of, reconsider or remove specific School Literary Materials due to perceived potential for harm if used in instructional contexts.
- 5.1.2 The Principal shall acknowledge the concern in writing to the applicant and initiate a review by a school-based committee (including the Principal, teacher(s), Learning Commons staff member(s) (if applicable), and where appropriate, a representative from Learning Services;
- 5.1.3 The Principal may authorize the temporary removal of the resource from circulation while the review is underway.
- 5.1.4 The review committee will evaluate the resource using [the Provincial Resource Review Guide](#), considering curriculum alignment, developmental appropriateness, inclusivity, equity, and compliance with Ministerial Order #034/2025.
- 5.1.5 The Principal shall render written decision, including the rationale, and communicate it to the applicant.

## 5.2 Formal Reconsideration

- 5.2.1 If the concern is not resolved at the informal stage, the applicant may submit a formal request in writing to the Superintendent of Learning Services within 10 days of receiving the Principal’s decision.
- 5.2.2 Upon receipt of the formal request, the Superintendent of Learning Services shall convene a Division Review Committee, which may include (as appropriate to the resource in question):
- A Division Principal or designate;
  - A Religious Education Consultant;
  - A Curriculum Consultant; and,
  - Additional curriculum or subject-matter specialists as required.
- 5.2.3 The Division Review Committee will evaluate the resource using the [Provincial Resource Review Guide](#) and Ministerial Order #034/2025.
- 5.2.4 The committee may recommend either retention, restriction, relocation or removal of the resource.

5.2.5 The Superintendent of Learning Services shall provide a written decision to the Chief Superintendent including rationale for the decision.

5.2.6 The Chief Superintendent shall provide a written decision to all interested parties including the applicant.

Adopted: June 30, 2017  
Reviewed/Revised: February 5, 2021, January 5, 2026

Reference: Education Act, Sections 18, 51, 52, 53, 54, 57, 196, 197, 222  
Ministerial Order #034/2025 – Student Learning  
[Provincial Resource Review Guide](#) (May 2025)  
[Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12](#)  
AP 140 – Responsible Uses of Division Information Technology Resources  
AP 351 – Student Code of Conduct