

CODE: GIBD.AR**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (05-01-2026)**TOPIC:** School Literary Materials**ISSUE DATE:** (05-01-2026)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2033)

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this administrative regulation is to ensure compliance with the Government of Alberta's Department of Education and Childcare *Ministerial Order #034/2025 Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*.

DEFINITIONS

Child, as defined by the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*, means a child younger than six years of age who is enrolled in an early childhood services program and therefore does not fall within the definition of "student" in the *Education Act*.

Classroom collection, as defined by the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*, 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.

School literary materials, as defined by the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*, means any materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, whether in physical or electronic form, that are accessible or available to children or students at a school.

Sexual act, as defined by the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*, means an activity or action of a distinctly sexual nature, including but not limited to:

- 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.
- Penetration of the penis into the vagina or anus.
- 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.
- Ejaculation onto or into another person.
- 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.

Visual depiction, as defined by the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*, means a visual or graphic representation, such as a drawing or painting, an

illustration, a photographic or digital image or a video file.

RESPONSIBILITY

The principal will:

1. Support the ongoing review of the school's collection of literary materials, and classroom collections, to ensure it complies with the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*, and all other requirements outlined in the administrative regulation.
2. Support, as required, the central review process of a school literary material when a request for review has been initiated, as set out in Section C of this administrative regulation.
3. Provide parents the opportunity to access the classroom collection of literary materials available to their child.

The Central Decision Unit (DU) responsible for library systems will:

1. Maintain a database of the Division's collection of literary materials to support principals in their responsibility to review their school's literary materials.
2. Establish, maintain and update, as required, a publicly available listing of all literary materials for each Division school.

The Central Decision Unit (DU) responsible for the review process of literary materials will:

1. Upon receipt of a School Literary Material Review Request Form, initiate the process to review the material based on the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials*.

REGULATION

The Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials* do not apply to:

- A public library as defined in the *Libraries Act*.
- Learning and teaching resources authorized by the Minister.
- Material, whether in physical or electronic form, brought into the school by a child or student without the knowledge of any Division employee.

A. STANDARDS FOR THE SELECTION, AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS OF SCHOOL LITERARY MATERIALS

The Division must establish procedures for schools to follow that meet the following expectations, as set out in the Government of Alberta's *Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials* (referred to hereafter as Standards):

1. The principal must ensure that school literary materials containing any explicit visual depiction of a sexual act are not accessible or available to children or students in the school, and must ensure that no such school literary materials are selected for inclusion in a school library, unless such materials are for information or reference, such as technical materials, dictionaries or encyclopedias, that are not narrative in nature.

2. The principal must review school literary materials to ensure compliance with the Standards and the Division's policies or procedures required in accordance with these Standards.
3. The Division must establish and maintain a publicly available listing of all school literary materials other than those contained in a classroom collection.
4. The principal must ensure that the parents of the children or students who have access to a classroom collection are informed of the school literary materials contained specifically in the classroom collection.
5. The Division must, on request by the Minister, provide to the Minister any information and reports on school literary materials.

B. CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION, CURATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL LITERARY MATERIALS

1. Division staff will select, curate and manage literary materials in alignment with the Canadian School Libraries selection guidelines, the Standards and the Division quality standards of:
 - a. Suitability to students' age, social and emotional development and learning needs.
 - b. Suitability in fostering equity and respect with regard to ethnicity or culture; religious belief or non-belief; gender, gender identity or gender expression; sexual orientation; political or regional perspectives.
 - c. Accuracy and respectful inclusion of ways of knowing and diverse perspectives, in historical and contemporary contexts, of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures.
 - d. Accuracy and respectful inclusion of ways of knowing and diverse perspectives, in historical and contemporary contexts, of Francophones living in Alberta, Canada and the world.
 - e. Accessibility and support for equitable and inclusive learning environments.
 - f. Alignment with the goals and priorities of the Division.

C. SCHOOL LITERARY MATERIAL REVIEW REQUEST

1. A request to review, change the access to or availability of, reconsider or remove specific school literary materials in a particular school for reasons related to the Standards can be made by a:
 - a. Child or student enrolled in the school.
 - b. Division employee.
 - c. Parent of a child or student enrolled in a school.
 - d. Member of the school council.
 - e. Member of the community with a direct connection to the school.
2. An applicant, as identified in Section C.1 of this administrative regulation, will complete and submit the Division's School Literary Material Review Request Form.
 - a. The written request must clearly identify why the literary material was identified for review using the Standards.
 - b. The completed form will be submitted to a Division email account managed by the central decision unit responsible for the school literary material review process.
3. Receipt of the School Literary Material Review Request Form will initiate the Division's review process, including notifying:
 - a. The applicant who initiated the review.

- b. The school principal associated with the literary review request.
- 4. Upon notification of a literary material being under review the school principal will provide the material to the central decision unit conducting the review.
- 5. The review process will be conducted by a central review committee using the Standards as the criteria to review the material and inform the outcome of the review.
 - a. While the material is under review it will remain available to students.
- 6. Within 60 operational days after receiving the literary material, a determination will be made about the literary material submitted. The Division will communicate the outcome of the review to the applicant and the principal.
 - a. Should it be determined that, based on the Standards, the literary material should not be accessible to students in the library or a classroom library, the material will be removed from student access by the school.
 - b. The outcome of the review will be included in the Division's process to notify all schools around literary materials that need to be removed from student access under the Standards.
 - i. This will include updating the Division's library system that supports cataloguing and public availability of library materials.

REFERENCES

DK.BP Division Technology
DKB.AR Appropriate Use of Division Technology
GI.AR Learning and Teaching Resources
HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct
HG.AR Student Behaviour and Conduct
Division's School Literary Material Review Request Form
Canadian School Libraries selection guidelines
Ministerial Order #034/2025
Protection of Privacy Act
Access to Information Act