

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 241

CHALLENGE OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Background

Parents, community members and students should have the opportunity to bring their concerns with the use of certain materials in the classroom, available in the school library or found in the school. Students should receive classroom experiences, which cover a wide range of issues and areas of study. In addition, the issues and materials used within the school must be consistent with the standards and values of the Catholic faith.

1. Informal Reconsideration
 - a. An individual wishing to request a review of a learning resource must first bring the matter to the attention of the principal.
 - b. An individual parent may submit a written request to the principal to restrict access to his/her child of a given learning resource. The principal may accept the written request upon receipt and the resource shall be made inaccessible until reviewed. However, if the principal disagrees with the written request, the resource shall remain accessible until completion of the "Formal Reconsideration" process.
 - c. The principal shall explain the guiding principles involved in the selection of learning resources and the manner in which the learning resource in question is utilized in the school education program. The principal may involve appropriate Division personnel in the explanation of the materials selection procedure, criteria and the qualifications of those persons selecting the materials.
 - d. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
 - e. If unresolved at this stage, proceed to Formal Reconsideration.
2. Formal Reconsideration
 - a. A complainant may pursue a complaint beyond the informal level by completing a "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form and forwarding it to the principal (see Form 36).
 - b. The principal shall forward copies of the completed "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" to the Associate Superintendent - Learning Services.
 - c. Within 30 days from the receipt of the "Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources" form, it shall be referred to a Reconsideration Committee composed of:
 - i. The Associate Superintendent – Learning Services;
 - ii. The principal, or designate;

- i. A teacher or library technician;
- ii. A parent, selected from the community; and
- iii. A priest or other knowledgeable expert if the learning resource is faith related.
- d. The principal shall:
 - i. Form the Reconsideration Committee;
 - ii. Establish a meeting date as soon as possible after the complaint is received; and
 - iii. Name the convener of the Reconsideration Committee.
- e. The Reconsideration Committee shall examine the challenged learning resource and make a recommendation.
- f. The complainant may appeal any decision of the Reconsideration Committee within 15 days directly to the Board.

The Use of Movies and Videos in School

Background

It is recognized that, in some instances, a parent or student may have a concern about a particular film or video being used as a learning resource. This person will usually appeal directly to the school principal. The controversial material may be publicly sensitive and on which there is no consensus of values or beliefs. The film or video may include topics on which reasonable people may sincerely disagree and may reflect positions quite different than those taken by the Catholic Church. Members of the public have the right to challenge the use of materials by demonstrating that the resource being used does not reflect the vision, mission and fundamental beliefs of the school division or the Catholic Church. *The Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* has a controversial issues provision (p. 82).

Concern

- Teaching staff could inadvertently show movies or videos that are inappropriate for students in a Catholic school.
- A teacher could show movies in class without any instructional objectives.
- Parents may object to what they consider inappropriate use of movies in the classroom.

Some Facts

- Movies and videos are significant expressions of our culture and when used appropriately can be very effective in teaching values and morals and in promoting discussion of various matters of faith.
- Students can become desensitized and negatively influenced by media.
- Media often portrays a lifestyle that is contradictory to the vision, mission and fundamental beliefs of the school division or the Catholic Church.
- Our faith needs to be considered and reflected in the selection and use of instructional materials and resources.
- We cannot prevent our students from viewing inappropriate movies or videos in their homes. We can do this while they are in our care. We can determine the educational value and moral fibre of a particular movie or video.

It is up to the principal to determine what movies or videos can be shown in the school and the action to be taken if a parent or student requests being excluded from a movie or video that is being shown.

Helpful Websites (updated January 2007)

- www.usccb.org
The US Conference of Catholic Bishops, on their website, offers reviews on recently released movies.
- www.screenit.com
This web site has a comprehensive list of movie reviews and each movie is rated in fifteen categories.
- www.dove.org
This is a Christian web site that offers a listing of the top ten Dove-Approved movies.
- www.moviereporter.com
This web site includes film and video reviews from a Christian perspective.
- www.decentfilms.com
This web site provides reviews on four different aspects of the film including moral and spiritual value.

Principals can use the attached form for tracking and regulating movie and video use in the school.

Use of Movie or Video in the Classroom FORM

Please complete the following form and submit to the school administrator two days prior to the movie being shown.

Teacher Name: _____

Grade/Subject/Course: _____

Title of Movie: _____

Date of Viewing: _____

Describe how you will use this movie in the classroom. For example, will you be showing the whole movie or just certain excerpts?

Please outline the educational outcomes that are achieved through the viewing of this material.

Please outline how you will prepare the students for the viewing of this film.

Briefly outline your follow-up (e.g. classroom discussion, reflection paper, assignment) after the viewing of this movie/video.

Is this movie appropriate for the age of your students? (explain)

What is the movie's rating?

Have you previewed this movie or video? (circle one) Yes No

Is this movie covered by our movie copyright license? (circle one) Yes No

Please attach a copy of the movie review from one on the listed movie websites.

www.usccb.org

www.screenit.com

www.dove.org

www.decentfilms.com

Date Submitted: _____