

The Ministerial Order (#034/2025) from Alberta Education and Childcare establishes provincial standards for the selection, availability, and access of school literary materials. These standards are designed to ensure that content is developmentally appropriate and can positively impact children's and students' mental health and well-being. The Ministerial Order supports student well-being and learning opportunities, aligning with Alberta Education's commitment to safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments.

As a school authority, ECACS has the responsibility to provide its students with a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and nurtures a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self. Within the context of our mission as a Catholic school division, ECACS affirms these requirements, ensuring that all school literary collections reflect Catholic values, foster literacy, and promote intellectual curiosity while protecting students from inappropriate content.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Administrative Procedure, the following terms apply, consistent with Ministerial Order #034/2025:

- **Child:** A child younger than 6 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:** 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 Authority:** Any Alberta public or separate school board, francophone regional authority, operator of a charter school, person responsible for the operation of an independent school, or independent ECS operator as defined in the Early Childhood Services Regulation (AR 126/2022).
- **School Literary Materials:** 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:** 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.
 - Excluded are activities 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:** A visual or graphic representation, such as a drawing or painting, an illustration, a photographic or digital image, or a video file.

Procedures

Selection Standards

1. The Principal shall ensure that the school provides a comprehensive collection of literary materials that:
 - Encourage knowledge, literacy, and appreciation of literature and the arts;
 - Provide information allowing students to make considered judgments;
 - Reflect Canadian society, including contributions of varied ethnic groups;
 - Offer a global perspective;
 - Enhance Catholic education and represent Church teachings.
2. No school literary materials containing explicit **visual depictions** of sexual acts shall be accessible or available, or selected for inclusion in a school library, unless such materials are for information or reference (e.g., dictionaries, encyclopedias, or technical materials that are not narrative in nature).
3. Materials must reflect Catholic values and support ECACS' educational goals.

Collection Review

1. Principals will ensure continuous review of school literary materials to ensure compliance with these standards.
2. Any non-compliant material must be removed immediately.

Public Listing & Parent Notification

1. ECACS will establish and maintain an up-to-date, publicly available online listing of all school literary materials (excluding classroom collections).
2. Parents of children or students with access to a classroom collection must be informed of the materials contained in that collection

Reporting Requirements

1. The Superintendent will provide any requested reports or information on school literary materials to the Minister of Education and Childcare.

Request for Review / Reconsideration Process

- A process will be available for:
 - A child or student enrolled in the school,
 - An ECACS employee,
 - A parent or guardian of a child or student enrolled in the school,
 - A member of the school council,
 - A community member with a direct connection to the school, to request that the school authority review, change access to, reconsider, or remove specific school literary materials.

The Principal shall ensure:

- Informal review of materials is conducted promptly with results communicated within five school days.

- Formal written requests are reviewed by a committee consisting of the Principal, Teacher-Librarian, and a Division Office representative, with a decision issued within 20 school days.
- The complainant and Superintendent are informed of the committee's decision, with the right to appeal to the Superintendent.

Communication

1. ECACS will clearly communicate this procedure to school authority employees, children and students, and parents.
2. This procedure will be communicated via the ECACS website, staff meetings, and school newsletters.

Reviewed/Revised: March 2014, January 2016, April 2016 September 2025

Reference:

- Education Act, Section 18(2)(b)
- Ministerial Order (#034/2025)
- Guide to Education