



ALBERTA

EDUCATION
AND CHILDCARE
Office of the Minister

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE
MINISTERIAL ORDER (#034/2025)

Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials

I, Demetrios Nicolaides, the Minister of Education and Childcare, pursuant to section 18(2)(b) of the *Education Act*, make the Order in the attached Appendix, being the Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials.

DATED at Calgary, Alberta September 8, 2025.

Demetrios Nicolaides

**MINISTER OF EDUCATION
AND CHILDCARE**

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EDUCATION ACT

Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Literary Materials

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta recognizes the educational merit of school libraries, including the importance of access to classic literary works;

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta recognizes that ensuring children and students have access to literary materials in school that are developmentally appropriate can positively impact the mental health and well-being of children and students;

WHEREAS a school authority 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; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta wishes to support the selection, availability and access to school literary materials that promote children's and students' well-being and learning opportunities;

THEREFORE, I, Demetrios Nicolaides, the Minister of Education and Childcare, pursuant to section 18(2)(b) of the *Education Act*, order as follows:

Definitions

1. For the purposes of these Standards,
 - (a) "child" means 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*;
 - (b) "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;
 - (c) "school authority" means 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);

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- (d) “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;
- (e) “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;
- (f) “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;

Standards for School Literary Materials

2. Effective January 5, 2026, a school authority is required to implement the following standards respecting the selection, availability and access of school literary materials:
- (a) The school authority 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 a 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;

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- (b) The school authority must regularly review school literary materials to ensure the school authority complies with these Standards and the school authority's policies or procedures required in accordance with these Standards;
- (c) The school authority must establish and maintain a publicly available listing of all school literary materials other than those contained in a classroom collection;
- (d) The school authority 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;
- (e) The school authority must, on request by the Minister, provide to the Minister any information and reports on school literary materials.

Information to Minister to Support Implementation

- 3. By October 31, 2025, a school authority must provide the Minister with a list of any school literary materials that the school authority intends to remove from schools in order to implement section 2(a) of these Standards.

School Authority Policies or Procedures

- 4. A school authority is required to have publicly available policies or procedures relating to the selection, availability and access to school literary materials that comply with these Standards no later than January 5, 2026.
- 5. A school authority may develop new policies or procedures to comply with section 4 of these Standards or may incorporate these Standards into existing policies or procedures.
- 6. A school authority's policies or procedures, at a minimum, are required to
 - (a) comply with the standards as prescribed in section 2,
 - (b) establish criteria for the selection, curation and management of school literary materials,
 - (c) set out a process for the review of school literary materials, and
 - (d) establish processes for
 - (i) a child or student enrolled in a school,
 - (ii) a school authority employee,
 - (iii) a parent of a child or student enrolled in a school,

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(iv) a member of a school council, or

(v) a member of the community with a direct connection to the school,

to request that the school authority review, change the access to or availability of, reconsider or remove specific school literary materials in a particular school for reasons related to section 2(a) of these Standards.

7. A school authority must

(a) clearly communicate the policies or procedures to school authority employees, children, students and parents, and

(b) make the policies or procedures publicly available.

Application of Standards

8. These Standards do not apply to

(a) a public library as defined in the *Libraries Act*,

(b) learning and teaching resources authorized or approved by the Minister, or

(c) material, whether in physical or electronic form, brought into the school by a child or student without the knowledge of any school authority employee.

Repeal

9. Ministerial Order #030/2025 is repealed.