

Subject: Materials for Distribution in Schools
Effective: September 22, 1967
Revised: June 1994; September 2003, August 1, 2006

1.0 PURPOSE

This policy establishes the requirements and sets out guidelines for materials distributed to students in or on school property that originate outside the public school system.

This policy also outlines the requirements and sets out guidelines for student and/or staff participation in contests, questionnaires and surveys in public schools.

This policy replaces the content of Policy 120 – Contests, Questionnaires, and Surveys.

2.0 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all New Brunswick public schools. It does not apply to public/school libraries, library materials or the distribution of such materials.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Distribution is the circulation or dissemination of materials by means of free hand outs, by selling or accepting donations for materials, or by posting or displaying materials.

Materials mean all printed and non-printed materials intended for distribution in a public school. Examples include, but are not limited to, leaflets, stickers, brochures, buttons, flyers, petitions, posters, questionnaires, surveys, contests, cassette tapes, videos and CD ROMs.

School activities are any activities sponsored by the school, including but not limited to, classroom work, library activities, physical education classes, official assemblies and other similar gatherings, school athletic contests, band concerts, school plays, and in-school lunch periods.

4.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

[Education Act](#), section:

- 6(b)(iii) The Minister may prescribe or approve instructional or other materials and equipment for use in the delivery of any program, service, course or evaluation procedure under this Act.

- 6(b.2) The Minister may establish provincial policies and guidelines related to public education within the scope of this Act.

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28(2)(c) The duties of a principal include ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to create and maintain a safe, positive and effective learning environment.

5.0 Goals / Principles

- 5.1** Information materials and participation in contests and questionnaires with educational relevance can engage students in a way that fosters, extends and recognizes each student's creative, artistic and problem-solving potential.
- 5.2** The Department of Education believes that children deserve to learn in an environment that is free of propaganda. Non-school-sponsored materials in or on school property must occur without compromising education or the learning environment.

6.0 REQUIREMENTS / STANDARDS

6.1 Distribution of Materials

- 6.1.1** All requests to circulate materials, organize contests, or distribute questionnaires and surveys must receive the approval of the Minister, when the request involves more than one school district per language sector. The materials must be submitted at least six (6) weeks in advance of the intended distribution time, together with appropriate information.
- 6.1.2** Materials intended for mass distribution must be:
- a) related to the New Brunswick curriculum or academic pursuits;
 - b) well prepared, using appropriate language that is grammatically correct;
 - c) age appropriate; and
 - d) in the language of the school or, if intended for classroom use, in the language of instruction of the classroom.
- 6.1.3** Materials of a religious nature are subject to the following process:
- a) A permission slip must be sent to parents asking if they wish their child to receive the religious material in question. The parent has the right to accept or decline.
 - b) The practice of "negative billing", or sending religious material home with the child when a permission slip has not been returned to the school will not be allowed.

- c) If parents actively request the receipt of religious material, by signing a permission slip sent home from school, then the school may respond to those requests. Only children whose parents request the material by signing the slip will receive it.

6.1.4 Distribution of the following is always prohibited:

- a) Materials that could cause foreseeable harm to students or others.
- b) Materials that are of a partisan political nature.
- c) Materials of a discriminatory nature pertaining to race, colour, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of origin, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation or sex.
- d) Materials that would be objectively considered:
- sexually inappropriate
 - libelous
 - harmful to a person's reputation
 - indecent
 - violent
 - insulting
 - harassment
- e) Materials which advertise any product or service inappropriate for minors such as the use of tobacco, alcohol or gambling.
- f) Materials intended for promotion, profit or other commercial purposes.

6.1.5 Any materials distributed without permission or otherwise violating this policy will be confiscated and disposed of.

6.1.6 Materials distributed in the classroom must be in compliance with [Policy 315](#) – *School/Community Partnerships and Sponsorships*.

7.0 GUIDELINES / RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 All requests to circulate materials, organize contests, or distribute questionnaires should receive the approval of the superintendent when the request involves a school district or part of one.

7.2 In making decisions regarding distribution, the school, school district or the Minister, as the case may be, should consider factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- the volume of the materials to be distributed
- whether distribution would require assignment of school district staff, use of school district equipment or other resources;

- whether materials promote the positive attitudes of sharing and cooperation and encourage participation rather than competition; and
- whether distribution would require that external persons be present on the school grounds.

- 7.3** Where it is unclear whether materials are appropriate for distribution or if a request for distribution raises questions or concerns, the superintendent should request the Department of Education's involvement in the decision.
- 7.4** The school administration should be responsible for the time, place and manner of distribution consistent with the provisions of this policy.
- 7.5** The distribution of any materials should not unduly impact on instructional time.
- 7.6** Due considerations should be given to the time required for teacher and student participation in any contest, survey or questionnaire. The activities should not require excessive work on the part of the teacher nor place a demand for extra resources on the school.
- 7.7** If any contest, survey or questionnaire solicits student work in the form of essays, pictures, posters, etc., consideration should be given to providing students with an informed critique of their efforts that is impartial and thoughtful.
- 7.8** Exhibitions of work as opposed to displays of winners are appropriate especially at elementary and middle levels and in those areas/subjects that form the common curriculum for grades K-8. Prizes and awards should be based on school participation and should increase and support school resources.

8.0 DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL POLICY-MAKING

District Education Councils (DECs) may develop any additional guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy. Requests confined to a school district involving one or more school are subject to DEC policy.

9.0 REFERENCES

[Policy 315](#) – *School/Community Partnerships and Sponsorships*

10.0 CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Department of Education – Policy and Planning Division
(506) 453-3090

Department of Education – Educational Programs and Services
(506) 453-2155

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