



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EDUCATION ON HUMAN SEXUALITY/ FAMILY LIFE (Policy Statement: Education on Human Sexuality/Family Life)

Purpose

Recognizing the responsibility of Catholic schools to support parents in their primary role as educator of their children, the Board seeks to ensure that family life education is conducted in a fashion which is both respectful of the role of the family as well as cognizant of the sensitivity and complexity of issues facing young people today.

References

Amoris Laetitia: Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, 2016
Ontario Catholic Secondary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 9-12, 2016, Religious Education
Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12, 2015, Health and Physical Education
Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8, 2012, Family Life Education
Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8, 2012, Religious Education
Our Language, Our Story – Character Education Through the Virtues, EOCCC, 2009
CARFLEO Resources
Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, ICE, 2011
Fully Alive, Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario
Parent Resources – Fully Alive, Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario
Educational Guidance in Human Love, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1983
Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162 <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm162.pdf>
Renewing the Promise, 2018

Procedures

1. Resources

- 1.1 Principals will ensure that the resources required to deliver the family life programs which have been prescribed by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) are in place in their schools, including the provision of information to families with regard to the availability of parent resources created by the ACBO through the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE).

- 1.2 The Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019 will be delivered through the Fully Alive program, as prescribed by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO).
- 1.3 Principals will ensure that the resources employed in family life education have been approved by the ACBO and are consistent with any directives issued by the local Bishop.
- 1.4 The Board’s Religious and Family Life Education Department will maintain appropriate supports for schools with regard to family life education.

2. Exemptions

Notice and Communications

- 2.1 The Board will provide parents with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations *by grade*.
- 2.2 The Board will inform parents that they can choose to have their child or children exempted from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by completing and returning an exemption form for each child.
- 2.3 Exemptions are limited to instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations Found in Strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019*. In the context of the Fully Alive program, the exemption corresponds to *Theme Three, Created Sexual: Male and Female*. Students will not be exempted from instruction related to any other expectations/themes.
- 2.4 The Board will make a standard exemption form (Appendix 1: Request for Exemption from Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations Found in Strand D of The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019) available to parents every school year. Parent/guardian requests for exemption must be made annually and will be subsequently adjudicated on an annual basis.
- 2.5 The teacher will notify all parents at least twenty school days before the start of the “period of instruction” related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations;
- 2.6 The teacher will inform parents of the date by which the completed exemption form or written request must be submitted in order for their child to be exempted from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations. The deadline for parents to submit their completed exemption form or written request must not be more than five school days before the start of the period of instruction.

- 2.7 In the case of an unforeseen event, schools have the authority to move the period of instruction to a later date in the school year and must give notice of the change to parents as soon as reasonably possible.
- 2.8 References to human development and sexual health made by teachers, board staff, or students outside the intentional teaching of content related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations are not included in the exemption policy/procedure.

Process

- 2.9 Students will be exempt from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations (*Fully Alive: Theme Three, Created Sexual: Male and Female*) without academic penalty when a request for an exemption has been made from a parent in writing in accordance with this policy.
- 2.10 The Board through the school principal and appropriate superintendent will receive parental requests for exemption from the human and sexual health curriculum expectations in order to ensure that these exemptions are being consistently addressed.
- 2.11 Requests for withdrawal must be made in writing to the school principal using the standard exemption form (Appendix 1: Request for Exemption from Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019) .
- 2.12 The principal, after consultation with his/her supervisory officer, will acknowledge the request in writing and will provide a decision.
- 2.13 Schools will retain the right to make a final decision whether to accept or reject a request for exemption that is returned after the official submission date.

Supervision of Exempted Students

- 2.14 Since the Board is responsible for student safety and well-being during instructional time, options for supervision will be offered for students who are granted an exemption. Parents must choose **one** of the following options for their child:
- a) to remain in the classroom during the exemption period without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health (*Fully Alive: Theme Three, Created Sexual: Male and Female*), and to be assigned work or activities by the teacher that are *unrelated* to Human Development and Sexual Health; *or*
 - b) to leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal. The supervision of the student will be determined by the school according to the board's policy/procedure; *or*
 - c) to be released into the care of the parent or the parent's approved designate.

- 2.15 The Board assumes neither responsibility for providing family life education in the area of human sexuality to any students who have been granted an exemption, nor of monitoring any such instruction occurring outside of the school.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Request for Exemption from Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations Found in Strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019*.

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