

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE – AP517-2

Family Life Education and the Fully Alive Program

Area: Teaching and Learning
Policy Reference: Catholic Curriculum and Education (PO517)

Approved: Sept. 15, 1992
Revised: Sept. 7, 1997; June 8, 2020

1. Purpose

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to provide clarity for Board staff, parents/guardians, pastoral teams, students and community members regarding roles and responsibilities related to the delivery of Family Life Education.

2. Definitions

Catholic Curriculum – in its broadest sense is a moral based education, where every student is seen as a gift from God to be nurtured and cherished. It involves a joint effort between parents, teachers, trustees, administrators and our entire Catholic community to educate our children in a manner that is permeated by the Catholic faith. It includes, but is not limited to, Religious and Family Life Education which forms the core of the Catholic curriculum.

Catholic Social Teachings- the Catholic doctrines on matters of human dignity and common good in society. The ideas address oppression, the role of the state, subsidiarity, social organization, concern for social justice, issues of wealth distribution.

Family Life Curriculum - The expectations associated with Family Life are outlined in the *Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8 – Family Life Education*. This curriculum is based on the vision that the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values acquired in the Family Life program will benefit students throughout their lives and help them to thrive in an ever-changing world by enabling them to acquire a Christian vision of personhood, relationships, sexuality and to develop the comprehension, capacity and commitment needed to lead fully human lives.

Learning Resources - refers to any material or a person with instructional content or function that is utilized for formal or informal teaching or learning purposes. Learning resources include but are not limited to human resources, print and/or digital materials, artwork, audio/visual, and eLearning resources.

Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations - are used as a framework for designing Ontario Catholic curriculum, in the development of youth leadership, teacher education and administrative programs containing seven overall and fifty-two specific expectations.

Religious Education Curriculum - The expectations associated with Religion are outlined in the *Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8 – Religious Education* and the *Ontario Catholic Secondary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 9-12 – Religious Education*. This curriculum is rooted in sacred scripture, catechism of the Catholic Church, and creedal statements and is a kind of map of the rich treasury which is the deposit of faith.

3. Procedures

- 3.1 The Fully Alive Family Life Education Program sponsored by the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (OCCB) is designated as the primary resource for the delivery of the Family Life Education Curriculum in Durham Catholic District School Board.
- 3.2 Implementation of the Family Life Education Curriculum includes the following three overall expectations which develop in complexity as they span grades 1 to 8.
 - a) Appreciating God's Goodness
 - b) Exploring Human Nature
 - c) Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing
- 3.3 The specific expectations for each grade, developed under the following five strands (themes) are to be taught each year:
 - a) Created and Loved by God
 - b) Living in Relationship
 - c) Created Sexual: Male and Female
 - d) Growing in Commitment
 - e) Living in the World
- 3.4 The Fully Alive Program which supports the implementation of the Family Life Curriculum was developed as a partnership for Church, Home and School working together to educate Catholic students. The Fully Alive Program is designed to match the Overall Expectations and Strands outlined in the Family Life Education Curriculum Document. Schools will communicate the philosophy

and content of the program to parents/guardians in order to enable them to fulfil their primary responsibility for education in Family Life.

- 3.5 All students are expected to participate fully in the complete Fully Alive Program.
- 3.6 The Superintendent of Education responsible for Religious and Family Life Education shall:
 - a) Work collaboratively with Family of Schools Superintendents and Teaching and Learning Consultants to provide leadership, direction and support to schools regarding the implementation of this administrative procedure
 - b) Ensure that staff have access to current copies of the necessary family communication letters which accompany the Family Life Program.
- 3.7 The Principal shall:
 - a) Conduct a yearly inventory of Fully Alive program materials prior to the start of the school year
 - b) Ensure that educators responsible for Family Life Education Curriculum have access to the necessary Fully Alive Program materials and resources for their grade.
 - c) Ensure that Family Life Education is being provided as part of weekly Religious Education instruction for students from Grades 1-8.
 - d) Ensure that the Fully Alive Program Family Letter is distributed to all families in September of each school year.
- 3.8 Catholic Educators responsible for Family Life Education shall:
 - a) Utilize the Fully Alive Program to support the delivery of the Family Life Education Curriculum.
 - b) Begin implementation of the Fully Alive Curriculum at the start of the school year and proceed consistently until completion ensuring that each strand is delivered consecutively in the prescribed order.
 - c) Ensure that the Family Letters for each theme are shared with parents/guardians prior to the start of instruction for each new strand (theme).
 - d) Give particular consideration to communication with families of students in Grade 1 and/or those new to a Durham Catholic School to ensure that they receive all information about the program prior to its implementation in the classroom.
- 3.9 Parents/Guardians shall:
 - a) Review information provided by the school regarding the Fully Alive Program.
 - b) Where concerns or questions arise, make an appointment to see the teacher.

- 3.10 Teachers will utilize the Fully Alive Family Life curriculum to address instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in Strand D of the Grade 1 -8 Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum.
- a) Teachers must send home the Fully Alive program letter (available on MyDCDSB) to parent(s)/guardian(s) at the onset of the school year and the parent letter for each theme in advance of the theme being taught.
 - b) The parent letter for theme three (Created Sexual - Male and Female) must be sent home at least 20 days before the period of instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations.
 - c) When a teacher receives an exemption request from a parent, the teacher should discuss the request with the parent to fully understand the parents' concerns. Exemptions requests for the Sexual Education component of Fully Alive, the Board's Family Life program must be given to the school Principal who will review this request with the parent. The principal may choose to convene a meeting with the parent and the Religion Consultant. When making the decision for an exemption, the principal must provide parents with the option of how the exempted student will be supervised during the exemption period:
 - i. The student will remain in the classroom during the exempted period without taking part in the instruction of the Human Development and Sexual Health and to be assigned work or activities by the teacher that are unrelated to the exempted material.
 - ii. The student will leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and will remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal.
 - iii. The student will be released into the care of the parent/guardian or the parent/guardian's approved designate.
 - d) Exemptions will only be granted for instruction related to **all** the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student's grade and not for instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectations.
 - e) There will be no academic penalty for an exemption. A student's grade for the Fully Alive program will not include the expectations for which the student was exempt.
- 3.11 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.

- 3.12 If an employee has questions or concerns arising from the implementation of this administrative procedure, they should be addressed with their immediate supervisor.

4. Sources

- 4.1 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
- 4.2 Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario
- 4.3 Institute for Catholic Education
- 4.4 Ministry of Education
- 4.5 The Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8 – Religious Education (2012)
- 4.6 The Ontario Catholic Secondary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 9-12 – Religious Education (2016)
- 4.7 The Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8 – Family Life Education (2012)
- 4.8 Renewing the Promise – A Pastoral Letter for Catholic Education
- 4.9 PPM162 Exemption from Instruction Related to Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019

5. Appendices

- 5.1 Fully Alive Family Letters for the Family Life Education Program. These documents can be found on DCDSB Intranet website under Teaching and Learning ([Family Life Family Letters Teaching and Learning Website](#))

6. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 6.1 Catholic Curriculum and Education PO517
- 6.2 Catholic Curriculum and Education AP 517-1

7. Related Forms

Nil