



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE – AP202-1

Blessings and Official Openings

Area: Governance
Policy Reference: Blessings, Openings and Anniversaries (PO202)
Approved: June 8, 2020
Revised: April 7, 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to provide clear and consistent guidelines for the planning and implementation of blessings, official openings and major additions within the Durham Catholic District School Board (the “Board”).

2. Definitions

Nil

3. Procedures

- 3.1 The blessing and official opening of a school (or major addition) should be held as soon as possible after the new school has been occupied.
- 3.2 The blessing and official opening of a school (or major addition) will be reflective of the beliefs, teachings, and faith traditions of the Catholic Church.
- 3.3 The blessing and official opening of a school (or a major addition) should be planned by a committee established by the principal, who will act as chair of the committee. The committee should consist of:
 - a) Chair of the Board or designate;
 - b) Director of Education or designate;
 - c) Local Trustee(s);
 - d) Principal;
 - e) Vice Principal(s) (where applicable);
 - f) Parish Priest and other local Clergy;

- g) Catholic School Council representative (where a Catholic School Council has not been established, a parent representative may be selected by the principal);
 - h) Student Representation (as determined by the principal).
- 3.4 A local trustee representative on the committee or designate shall act as Host for the occasion.
- 3.5 Funding of up to \$5,000 will be provided to the school to support the ceremony requirements associated with the blessing and official opening of the new school.
- 3.6 The allocation for the opening of a major addition shall be up to \$1,500 to support the ceremony requirements.
- 3.7 The principal must work with the Communications Department to determine the appropriate invitation list, program, and speakers list.
- 3.8 The principal or designate shall assume responsibility to send invitations to local clergy, trustees, members of the Catholic School Council, the director and members of senior administration. The school community shall be invited to the celebration through communication channels as determined by the school in consultation with the Communications Department.
- 3.9 The principal will work with the Board to ensure that all the appropriate symbols of significance (e.g., flags, portrait of the current Pope, classroom crucifixes, etc.) are purchased or obtained and are in place in advance of the official blessing and opening.
- 3.10 Upon approval of the building plan, a plaque shall be prepared containing the following information:
- a) Board name;
 - b) Board logo;
 - c) names of the Chair of the Board and each Trustee who held office at the time of the opening;
 - d) name of the Director of Education;
 - e) name of the Superintendent of Business Services;
 - f) name of the Architect;
 - g) name of the General Contractor;
 - h) the date of the official opening and the name of the officiant; and
 - i) the date of the official establishment of the school community (if this occurred before the date of construction).
- 3.11 The blessing and official opening must include a liturgical component (e.g., Mass, Liturgy of the Word).
- 3.12 The blessing and official opening must include the Board-approved Land Acknowledgment.

4. Sources

Nil

5. Appendices

Nil

6. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

6.1 [Blessings, Openings and Anniversaries Policy \(PO202\)](#)

6.2 [Celebration of School Anniversaries Administrative Procedure \(AP202-2\)](#)