



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

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE – 216-4

Opening or Closing Exercises

Area: Governance
Policy Reference: Equity and Inclusive Education (PO216)

Approved: October 22, 2001 (PO417)
Revised: February 2, 2017 (PO417); January 13, 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure in schools is to provide a structured and consistent approach to starting and ending the school day. These exercises typically include activities such as the Land Acknowledgement, the singing of the national anthem, prayers, scripture readings, or other reflective practices.

2. Definitions

Nil

3. Procedures

- 3.1 Every Elementary and Secondary school under the Board's jurisdiction shall include a period of time designated for opening or closing exercises within the daily schedule.
- 3.2 Opening or closing exercises shall include the Land Acknowledgement, singing of O Canada, and Prayer (Appendix A English/French).
- 3.3 The principal is responsible for considering the inclusion of the Oath of Citizenship and Pledge to the Canadian Flag (Appendix A English/French) in consultation with the Catholic School Council at the beginning of each school year.
- 3.4 Principals shall review the procedures and expectations for Opening or Closing exercises with staff.
- 3.5 Parents/guardians/caregivers or adult students may request exemptions from specific components of the Opening or Closing exercises by submitting a written request to the principal.

- 3.6 The principal must review and approve exemption requests in accordance with Board policy.

4. Sources

- 4.1 [Education Act, Regulation 298, Operation of Schools](#)
- 4.2 [Education Act, O. Reg. 435/00](#)
- 4.3 [Ontario Human Rights Code, s.19](#)

5. Appendices

- 5.1 [Appendix A – Opening or Closing Exercises](#)

6. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 6.1 [Equity and Inclusive Education Policy \(PO216\)](#)
- 6.2 [Equity and Inclusive Education Administrative Procedure \(AP216-1\)](#)
- 6.3 [Religious Accommodations Administrative Procedure \(AP216-2\)](#)

Appendix A – Opening or Closing Exercises

Pledge of Citizenship / Canadian Oath of Citizenship

English

I swear/affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King Charles the Third, King of Canada, his Heirs and Successors, according to law and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.

French

J'affirme solennellement que je serai fidèle et porterai sincère allégeance à Sa Majesté le roi Charles Trois, Roi du Canada, à ses héritiers et successeurs, que j'observerai fidèlement les lois du Canada et que je remplirai loyalement mes obligations de citoyen canadien.

Pledge to the Canadian Flag

English

To my Flag and to the country it represents, I pledge RESPECT and LOYALTY. Wave with PRIDE from sea to sea and within your folds, keep us ever UNITED. Be for all symbol of LOVE, FREEDOM and JUSTICE. God keep our FLAG. God protect our CANADA.

French

À mon drapeau et au pays qu'il représente, je promets RESPECT et FIDÉLITÉ. D'une mer à l'autre flotte avec FIERTÉ et dans tes plis garde nous toujours UNIS. Sois, pour nous tous, un symbole de l'AMOUR, de la LIBERTÉ et de la JUSTICE. Dieu garde notre DRAPEAU. Dieu protège notre CANADA.

O'Canada

English

O'Canada! Our home and native land! True patriot love in all of us command! With glowing hearts we see thee rise - the true north strong and free! From far and wide O'Canada - We stand on guard for thee, God keep our land, glorious and free, O'Canada we stand on guard - for - thee, O'Canada we stand on guard - for - thee.

French

O Canada! Terre de nos aïeux Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux! Car ton bras sait porter l'épée, Il sait porter la croix! Ton histoire est une épopée Des plus brillants exploits Et ta valeur, de foi trempée, Protégera nos foyers et nos droits. Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.

Land Acknowledgement

English

We here in the Durham Region respectfully acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island.

French

Nous, ici dans la région de Durham, reconnaissons respectueusement que nous sommes sur les terres traditionnelles des Mississaugas de l'île Scugog.