

POLICY – PO517

Catholic Curriculum and Education

Area: Teaching and Learning
Source: Superintendent of Education – Teaching and Learning

Approved: April 26, 2010
Revised: June 10, 2019; May 11, 2020

1. Introduction

Our mission statement reflects the Gospel values, the Catholic Social Teachings and Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. This mission is accomplished through explicit instruction in religion and family life, the full integration of the Catholic worldview into instructional practices across all curriculum and participation in faith-based activities in the home, school, parish and community. The implementation of Catholic Curriculum will respect the denominational rights of Roman Catholic schools as set out in Section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and the Education Act.

Our Catholic schools seek to create a community that accompanies, builds relationships, encourages engagement and instils hope, and forms joyful disciples.

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/guardians, 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 idea 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 – 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, Grade 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. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the connection between the Catholic faith, daily instruction and related teaching resources, in order to promote the development of religious knowledge, understanding and the skills necessary for lifelong learning and spiritual development among all students in the Durham Catholic District School Board. This policy serves as the basis for all administrative procedures related to curriculum implementation in schools.

4. Application / Scope

This policy applies to all staff and stakeholders responsible for the planning and implementation of Catholic curriculum and education in the Durham Catholic District School Board.

5. Principles

5.1 The Board believes that:

5.1.1 Parents/guardians register their children in the Catholic school system because of their belief in Catholic values and religious concepts being promulgated.

- 5.1.2 All students are to be educated in an environment whereby instructional practices support a faith-filled Catholic education that integrates the teachings of the Gospel across all curriculum subject areas. This instruction is supported by the Catholic Social teachings, Catholic Graduate Expectations and current elementary and secondary Religious and Family Life Education curriculum documents.
- 5.1.3 The guidance and direction provided by the local Ordinary, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Institute for Catholic Education is essential to the implementation of Catholic curriculum and education.
- 5.1.4 Within the framework of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE), our graduates will strive to be effective communicators, reflective thinkers, lifelong learners, collaborative contributors, caring family members, responsible citizens and discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community.
- 5.1.5 The home, the Church and the school cooperate in partnership with one another to fully educate the child through a holistic approach.

6. Requirements

- 6.1 The Director of Education shall issue administrative procedures to support this policy and amend them thereafter as the need may arise.
- 6.2 The Director of Education shall:
 - a) support decision making processes that recognize the foundational triad of home, school and parish;
 - b) ensure that the selection of Catholic teaching resources will be consistent with the most current Religious and Family Life Education curriculum documents and Ministry of Education guidelines;
 - c) ensure that all teaching, administrative and support staff in schools will be made fully aware of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations and the essential nature of these expectations for graduates from the Durham Catholic District School Board;
 - d) ensure that Catholic educators are provided with the appropriate training and resources to teach the Religious Education Program.
- 6.3 All students are expected to participate fully in the complete Religious Education Program, the prayer and liturgical life of the school and be respectful of all religious observances.

- 6.4 The Durham Catholic District School Board will accept exemption requests related to the above requirement pursuant to applicable legislation (e.g., Subsection 42(13) of the *Education Act*, PPM 162 Exemption from Instruction Related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019). Refer to administrative procedure AP517-1 Catholic Curriculum and Education for more information.

7. Sources

- 7.1 Education Act Subsection 42(13)
- 7.2 PPM 162 Exemption from Instruction Related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019
- 7.3 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
- 7.4 Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario
- 7.5 Institute for Catholic Education
- 7.6 Ministry of Education
- 7.7 The Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8 – Religious Education (2012)
- 7.8 The Ontario Catholic Secondary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 9-12 – Religious Education (2016)
- 7.9 The Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8 – Family Life Education (2012)
- 7.10 Renewing the Promise – A Pastoral Letter for Catholic Education

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 8.1 Catholic Curriculum and Education Administrative Procedure (AP517-1)