

Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in the <i>Ontario Curriculum Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019</i> (PPM 162) and the Fully Alive Catholic Family Life Program	
Adopted: January 6, 2020	Last Reviewed/Revised: December 5, 2022
Next Scheduled Review: 2025-2026	
Associated Policies & Procedures: II-53 Exemption from Instruction in the Family Life Program Fully Alive Related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in the Ontario Curriculum Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019	

Purpose

As directed by the Ontario Ministry of Education in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162 (August 21, 2019), the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) has developed and implemented a policy that allows for students to be exempt, at the request of parents/guardians, from 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*. Since the HCDSB provides Human Development and Sexual Health instruction through the Family Life program entitled *Fully Alive*, the request to have students exempt will be applied to specific instruction in the Family Life program in Grades 1 to 8.

Application and Scope

This procedure pertains to students enrolled in elementary schools in the HCDSB, in Grades 1 to 8, and all individuals who may be involved in the exemption, including parents/guardians, principals, teachers and HCDSB personnel who may have duties and/or responsibilities under the corresponding policy.

Parents/Guardians, as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “have the first responsibility for the education of their children.”¹ Thus, the Halton Catholic District School Board upholds, in solidarity, the rights of parents/guardians to decide instruction most specifically in the realm of Human Development and Sexual Health and limit the instruction received, in strand D of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Teachers have a responsibility to communicate to parents/guardians through the Fully Alive parent/guardian letters the unit of instruction. Teachers will provide parents/guardians with letters as

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2223

prepared by I.C.E. (Institute for Catholic Education) on Theme 3: Created Sexual: Male and Female. Teachers are to share the process and procedure for exemption, through the use of HCDSB generated forms and procedures. They also have a responsibility to share with parents/guardians the time frame in which the said instruction will be given. Teachers are also required to collect parent/guardian requests, submit those requests to the Principal and carryout those requests specific to the expectations found in strand D of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Administrators will work in partnership with the Bishops, teachers and parents/guardians to ensure communication to the parent community with regards to the process and procedure of exemption requests for strand D in the Health and Physical Education curriculum as outlined and approved by HCDSB staff. Administrators will collect this information and ensure that each request fulfils the requirements set out by PPM 162 and that this information is shared with their Supervisory Officer.

References

[Education Act](#)

[Policy/Program Memorandum No 162](#)

[Institute for Catholic Education: Parent Guide Fall 2019](#)

[Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)

Definitions

Family Life Education - refers to the Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8, 2012.

Fully Alive - refers to the program, created in partnership with the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario and Pearson Education, to support the Family Life Education in Ontario Catholic elementary schools.

Principles

As per the Policy/Program Memorandum, parents/guardians can request that there be an exemption from instruction related strand D in the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019.

The Home, the Church and the School are partners in the education of children in faith and morals, and parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children. Through PPM 162, parents/guardians have the right, and possibility, to request that their child be exempt without academic penalty from strand D in the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in any given grade.

As a Catholic educational system, the Halton Catholic District School Board is dedicated to the provincial work done in cooperation with the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, the Institute

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for Catholic Education and through the *Fully Alive* resource. This will continue to be the core resource for strand D of the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations.

Requirements

Notice and Communication:

- The HCDSB will provide parents/guardians with a list of strand D, Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade through the Family Life program.
- Parents/guardians will be notified and receive the Exemption Request Form 20 school days prior to the period of instruction related to strand D, Human Development and Sexual Health
- Parents/guardians will complete and return the Exemption Request Form to the classroom teacher in writing and no later than five school days before the start of instruction
- The HCDSB will inform the parent community of the final date written exemption requests will be accepted (no more than five school days before the start of the period of instruction).
- Notice and community communication can be but is not limited to: HCDSB website, school website, electronic mail, intra-mail, memos, teacher/school media as well as paper correspondence
- Communication will be provided annually to administrators of due dates for exemption submissions

Process:

The Halton Catholic District School Board Policy and Procedure for student exemption from strand D of the Health and Physical Education expectations will be reviewed with all administrators and teachers. When administrators receive a parent/guardian request for exemption the following process will be followed:

Protocol for Elementary Administrators in Response to a Parent/Guardian Request

- Inform parents of Grade level curriculum expectations in Family Life
- If parents/guardians request exemption, administrators are asked to invite parents/guardians to meet and discuss concerns and encourage parents/guardians to articulate which particular expectations are causing concern
- Explain how the concerning expectation will be taught through Fully Alive which is vetted and approved by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario
- If the parent/guardian insists on withdrawal, they are to do so in writing
- Arrange with classroom teacher to deliver last half hour of one specific day during the week. It is the responsibility of the school to provide supervision during this time.

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- Parents/guardians can be made aware of the timing of the lesson as they may wish to exercise their right to pick up their child rather than have them go to another class for the duration of the Family Life lesson
- Make clear that, in the case of an unforeseen event, school boards and 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.

Supervision:

Principals are required to give parents/guardians a choice of how their exempted child will be supervised during the exemption period:

- remain in class without taking part in the instruction;
- under supervision, leave the class for the duration of the instruction;
- be released into the care of the parent/guardian or designate.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Administrative Council

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board