Northeastern Catholic District School Board

EXEMPTION FROM HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SEXUAL HEALTH EXPECTATIONS, ELEMENTARY

Administrative Procedure Number: APE025

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is deeply committed to supporting the mandate, values, traditions, and distinctiveness of the Catholic School System while delivering the Ontario Curriculum Expectations. The NCDSB achieves the goals of teaching students about human development and sexual health through a faith-based family life program that teaches the content of our faith, the value of persons, human relationships, commitment, and social responsibility.

REFERENCES

Education Act
Policy Program Memorandum (PPM)
162 Exemptions from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8
NCDSB Policy
E-25 Exemption from Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations, Elementary

DEFINITIONS

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.

PROCEDURES

1.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

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

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Parents

i) Have the first responsibility for the education of their children.

ii) The NCDSB upholds this principle and understands the rights of parents to decide what instruction is received for their child as it relates to Human Development and Sexual Health as part of the Ontario Curriculum – Health & Physical Education.

2.2 Teachers

i) Have a responsibility to communicate learning expectations and instructional timelines to parents/guardians in advance of any instruction relating to human development and sexual health.

ii) Use the parent letters and resources provided within the Fully Alive program, along with those provided by the Institute for Catholic Education (I.C.E.) on Theme 3: *Created Sexual: Male and Female*, to support clear communication of learning expectations and plans.

iii) Share the process and procedure for learning exemption with parents/guardians, through the use of Board generated forms and procedures.

iv) Collect parent/guardian requests for exemption, and submit those requests to the principal.

v) Carry out the requests specific to the expectations found in Strand D of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

vi) Adhere to the provisions of the policy and attendant procedures.

2.3 Administrators

i) Work in partnership with the bishops, teachers, and parents/guardians to ensure communication to the parent community with regards to the process and procedures of exemption requests for Strand D in the Health and Physical Education curriculum as outlined and approved by board staff.

ii) Collect all related information and ensure that each request fulfils the requirements set out in PPM 162.

iii) Share information accordingly, as requested or required by a supervisory officer.

3.0 NOTICE AND COMMUNICATION

3.1 Parents/Guardians will be provided with a list of strand D, Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade.

3.2 Parents/Guardians will be notified and receive the information for exemption, at least 20 days prior to the period instruction related to strand D, Human Development and Sexual Health.

3.3 Parents/Guardians will complete and return the appropriate exemption form to the classroom teacher in writing and no later than five school days before the start of instruction.

3.4 Notice and communication can be but is not limited to: Board website, school website, electronic mail, memos, teacher/school media as well as paper correspondence.

3.5 Communication will be provided annually to administrators of due dates for exemption submissions.

4.0 PROCESS

4.1 The exemption process will be reviewed with school staff, as appropriate, at least one time annually.

4.2 When Administrators receive a parent request for exemption the following protocol will be followed:

i) Principal and/or classroom teacher invite Parent/Guardians to meet and discuss concerns , while encouraging Parents/Guardians to articulate which particular expectations are causing concern;

ii) Explain how the concerning expectations will be taught through *Fully Alive* which is vetted and approved by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario;

iii) If the parent/guardian insists on withdrawal, they are to do so in writing;

iv) Arrange with classroom teacher the instruction schedule, making modifications where appropriate. It is the responsibility of the school to provide supervision during this time;

v) Parents/Guardians should 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 / alternative location for the duration of the Family Life lesson.

vi) Make clear that, in the case of 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/guardians as soon as reasonably possible.

5.0 SUPERVISION OF EXEMPTED STUDENTS

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

i) Remain in class without taking part in the instruction;

ii) Under supervision, leave the class for the duration of the instruction;

iii) Be released into the care of the parent or designate.

6.0 RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

Form: Exemption from Instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health

Chief Executive Officer: *Tricia Stefanic Weltz*
Date: May 2026