



## **Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations – Exemption from Instruction**

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**Memo To:** All Staff  
**From:** Director of Education

### **ACCESSIBILITY:**

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### **PURPOSE:**

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) is deeply committed to supporting the mandate, values, traditions, and distinctiveness of Catholic Education while delivering the Ontario Curriculum Expectations. The WCDSB 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.

The purpose of the Religion and Family Life Curriculum, as developed by the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) under the guidance and in the name of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, is to foster and enhance the integrity, values, traditions, and distinctiveness of Catholic Education.

As per Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 162 (August 21, 2019), this policy allows for students to be exempted on an individual basis at the request of their parents, 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 in tandem with the related unit in the Fully Alive or Blessed and Beloved Catholic Family Life program.

### **REFERENCES:**

- [Education Act, R.S.O., 1990](#)
- [Fully Alive – Family Life Education Program, Association of Catholic Bishops of Ontario](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) 162, Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations, Grades 1-8, 2019, Ministry of Education](#)
- [The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1- 8 Health and Physical Education 2019, Ministry of Education](#)

### **FORMS:**

- APO029-01F: [Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations, Exemption from Instruction](#)

### **REPORTS:**

- N/A

### **APPENDICES:**

- Appendix A: [Request Acknowledgment](#) – Sample Letter



## **COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:**

The Religious Education and Family Life Curriculum supports the mandate, values, traditions and distinctiveness of the Catholic School System. The Home, the Church, and the school are partners in the education of children in faith and morals, and parents are the primary educators of their children.

The religious environment and climate of the Catholic School System, with the clear understanding that Religious Education and the many complementary elements, which contribute to maturity in Faith, are the central reason for the existence of Catholic schools.

In the Catholic School System, Religious Education is a fulsome curriculum intended to be taught in its entirety. With the expectations outlined in PPM 162, students in Grades 1-8 in the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) may be exempted from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D of the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, 2019 as well as the related unit in the Fully Alive or Blessed and Beloved Catholic Family Life program.

Exemptions are limited to instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in both the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education as well as the Fully Alive or Blessed and Beloved Catholic Family Life program.

Students will not be exempted from instruction related to any other expectations in this curriculum or related to expectations in other curriculum subjects. Exemptions will be granted only for instruction related to all the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student's grade, and not for the instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectations.

References to human development and sexual health made by teachers, board staff, or students outside the intentional teaching of content related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations are not included in this exemption policy/procedure.

There will be no academic penalty for an exemption.

There will be no assessment, evaluation, or reporting of the exempted students' achievement of Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in their particular grade. Exempted students' grade in health and physical education will be determined on the basis of the overall expectations in strand D of the curriculum, without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health.

## **POLICY REGULATION**

### **1. Legislative and Policy Context**

Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 162, Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations, Grades 1-8, 2019, requires all school boards to develop a policy outlining the process for requests for exemption from instruction related to the human development and sexual health expectations found in the Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8, Health and Physical Education. School board policies must outline the method of notification, process for exemptions, and options for supervision of exempted students.

### **2. Definitions**

Period of Instruction refers to the period, including the beginning and end dates, during which instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health during health and physical education classes is delivered. This period could extend over several days or weeks, depending on individual schools' calendars and teachers' lesson plans.

### **3. Scope and Application**

3.1 Exemptions are limited to 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. Students will not be exempted from instruction related to any other expectations in this curriculum or related to expectations in other curriculum subjects.

3.2 Exemptions will be granted only for instruction related to all the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student's grade, and not for instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectations.

3.3 References to human development and sexual health made by teachers, board staff, or students outside the intentional teaching of content related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations are not included in the exemption policy/procedure.

#### **4. Assessment and Evaluation**

4.1 There will be no academic penalty for an exemption. The exemption will be noted on the child's report card in the Family Life section with the following statement, "<Child's name> was exempt from instruction related to human development and sexual health expectations as part of Theme Three of the Fully Alive program."

4.2 There will be no assessment, evaluation, or reporting of exempted students' achievement of Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in their particular grade. Exempted students' grade in health and physical education will be determined on the basis of the overall expectations in strand D of the curriculum, without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health.

#### **5. Notice and Communications**

5.1 The Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in the Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8 Health and Physical Education Curriculum, 2019 are taught through the Family Life program developed by the Association of Bishops of Ontario. Parents will receive a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade with the Family Life Theme Three -Created Sexual letter. This letter will be sent a minimum of twenty days in advance of the period of instruction : Created Sexual of the Family Life program.

5.2 Parents who choose to have their child or children exempted from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by completing and returning an exemption form for each child in advance of the start of the program unit. If the parent chooses to request an exemption, the form must be submitted to the office at a minimum of five school days before the start of the period of instruction and should be addressed to the principal of the school.

5.3 A copy of all requests will be kept on file in the student's O.S.R. for the current and next school year by the school principal as per our records retention policy. A copy of the request form will be sent by the school to the Superintendent of Education responsible for Religion and Family Life Program. The exemption form will be made available at all elementary schools. Parents may request a copy of the form from the school.

5.5 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.

#### **6. Process**

6.1 A letter informing parents of the Family Life Program, containing a list of expectations of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum by grade, will be sent home to parents by the teacher a minimum of twenty days in advance of the start of the period of study.

6.2. Parents may request an exemption for their child/children by completing and returning the [Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations, Exemption from Instruction](#) (Form APO029-01F). The form must be received a minimum of five days before the period of instruction. Forms will be readily available to parents through request of the school office staff.

6.3. When a [Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations, Exemption from Instruction](#) (Form APO029-01F) has been received by the school, the school principal will acknowledge receipt of the request via a school letter in [appendix A](#) before the start of the period of instruction.

6.4. If the request is received outside of the official submission date, the principal shall make the final decision about whether to accept or reject the request for exemption.

## **7. Supervision of Exempted Students:**

7.1. School Boards are responsible for student safety and well-being during instruction. Parents are to be provided choice of how their exempted student will be supervised during the exemption period. Parents may choose one of the following options for their child:

- to remain in the classroom during the exemption period without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health through the Fully Alive or Blessed and Beloved Program, and to be assigned work or activities by the teacher that are unrelated to Human Development and Sexual Health; or
- to leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal. The supervision of the student will be determined by the school principal; or
- to be released into the care of the parent or the parent's approved designate.