



Policy Manual – Students

S.P.04 – Religious Education – JK-12

The mission of Catholic Education in Hamilton-Wentworth, in union with our Bishop, is to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which Our Lord Jesus Christ is the model.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board believes:

- That, "from a Catholic perspective, the purpose of education is not only the transmission of knowledge, but also the formation of the whole person of the student through bringing them to the personal integration of faith and life. Catholic schools are responsible for imparting Christian doctrine in an organic and systematic way, in order to initiate students into the fullness of Christian life and to elicit in response a personal commitment to that way of life";
- That "Catholic parents send their children to Catholic schools expecting them to experience education permeated with religious values, including religious instruction, to see Catholic values held, modelled, expressed and taught by teachers, to participate in the sacramental life of the Church carried out in the school, to receive career counselling and academic planning in the framework of vocation, and to enjoy an atmosphere in which values taught at home are supported"; and
- That "the three basic means by which Catholic school boards provide Catholic education are:
 - i) by developing each school as a Christian community in all of its academic and non-academic activities;
 - ii) by providing qualified teachers, supervisory officers and other personnel who are committed to building a Christian community in the school system; and
 - iii) by providing academic curricula, including formal religious instruction, in which Catholic faith and life are integrated".

"Catholic Education and Separate School Boards in Ontario", published in April 1988 by the Completion Office - Separate Schools

Purpose

The Board believes:

That the purpose of Catholic education, in union with the Bishop, is to assist all students to **realize their** fullness of humanity **of** which Our Lord Jesus Christ is model;

That its schools exist to enable students to strive for excellence in the context of Christian beliefs and **the teachings of the** Catholic Church; and

That, to achieve its purposes, the Board promotes a truly **Christ centered** community which acknowledges the centrality of Christ in the lives of its students.

It is, therefore, the policy of the Board that:

Enrolment in a Catholic elementary or secondary school operated by the Board requires participation in Religious Education programmes and courses.

At the secondary level, every student is required to include the appropriate Religious Education programme/course while enrolled in a Catholic secondary school operated by the Board (subject to s.136(o) of the Education Act, R.S.O. 1980, c.129, as amended).

NOTE: Failure to comply with these requirements may subject a student to sanctions.

1. Approved Programmes

The religious instruction programme for each grade and/or courses shall be only that approved by the Board.

2. Time Allotment

a) At the elementary level, the religious instruction programme shall occupy no less than ninety (90) hours of instructional time per year, either five-30 minute periods per week – or - four-40 minute periods a week.

b) At the secondary level, the religious instruction programme, grade 9 through graded 12, shall be 110 hours per academic year.

3. Programme Maintenance

The school is responsible for the maintenance of Board approved programmes, including the purchase of replacement materials.

4. Supervision of Programme/Course

The **school Principal and the Superintendent of Religion and Family Life** are responsible to the Principal for the supervision of Board approved programmes/courses.

5. Sacramental/Liturgical Preparation

At the elementary level:

- a) The Grade Two programme is the programme of preparation for first Reconciliation and first Eucharist.
- b) The Grade Seven programmes constitutes the programme of instruction for Confirmation.

At the secondary level:

- c) That a Sacramental/Liturgical Plan, including class retreats for designated grades, be developed by the Chaplaincy Leader, approved by the Principal, and submitted to the Superintendent responsible for Religion by October 31st.

6. Secondary Principals are encouraged to:

- a) Ensure that teachers who are assigned teaching assignments in Religious Education have a specialist qualification in Religious Education;
- b) Assign teachers, whenever possible, a full timetable in Religious Education.

Responsibility: Superintendent of Religion and Family Life

Related Board Committee: Religion, Family Life & Faith Formation

Policy Review Date

BM Original Policy Approved February 7, 1995

Revisions: 01 October 2002, 05 June 2007, 04 June 2012, 20 June 2017, 01 February 2022

To be reviewed every three years