



HAMILTON-
WENTWORTH
DISTRICT
SCHOOL
BOARD

HANDBOOK

For Principals and
Teacher-Advisors of
Faith Clubs and
Prayer Activities



OVERVIEW

OPERATING PRAYER ACTIVITIES & FAITH CLUBS IN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Process for Operating Faith Clubs

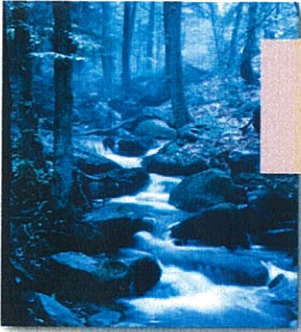
Faith Clubs are initiated by interested students who:

- Outline objectives to the Principal
- Suggest a potential Teacher-Advisor
- Approach a potential Teacher-Advisor
- Submit a Student Faith Club Agenda form to the Principal:
 - ◆ Include the Teacher-Advisor's name
 - ◆ Agree to:
 1. Teacher-Advisor (optionally: religious leader volunteer) meets regularly with interested students. These meetings are open to any student in the school.
 2. Invite speakers from other religious traditions once per term to speak to the Faith Club. (Please see the List of InterFaith Advisory Committee (IFAC) Contacts – Speakers for Faith Clubs)
 3. Follow the guiding principles set out in this Handbook and Faith Club & Prayer Activities Board Policy No. 7.19.
- The Principal approves the formation of the Faith Club, finds space, and approves time.
- Each semester IFAC receives and approves Faith Club meeting agendas that conform to school board policy on operating faith clubs.
- Students under the age of 18 who attend the Faith Club must provide the Teacher-Advisor with a signed parental Permission Form.
- Volunteers involved in faith-based activities must comply with the Hamilton Police Service Vulnerable Screening Process and be authorized to participate in the activity by their faith supervisory body.



Process for Operating Prayer Activities

- Prayer activity is initiated by interested students that outline their objectives to the Principal.
- The Principal finds space, approves time.
- Follow the guiding principles set out in this Handbook and Faith Club & Prayer Activities Board Policy No. 7.19.
- Volunteers involved in faith-based activities must comply with the Hamilton Police Service Vulnerable Screening Process and be authorized to participate in the activity by their faith supervisory body.



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FAITH CLUBS AND PRAYER ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

Religion in Schools

Religion and spirituality are important dimensions in the lives of many Hamiltonians. The City of Hamilton has not only an increasingly diverse multi-ethnic and multi-cultural population, but also an increasingly multi-faith one. Significant numbers of students are interested in learning about aspects of their own faiths and the faiths of others, as well as expressing their faiths in activities such as prayer and faith club activities during school hours. While the Ontario public school system is secular, the teaching about religions and the practice of one's faith are not banned on school property before, during or after school hours. There are, however, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) regulations governing religion in the schools (Regulations 262 and 298, and PPM 112).

In particular, the regulations prohibit indoctrination in the particular faith (expose, but do not impose). Following these regulations, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) has developed guidelines to govern both "Faith Clubs" and "Prayer Activity" in its high schools.

Purpose of this Handbook

This Handbook is intended to serve as a resource for Faith Club Teacher-Advisors and a reference for administrators regarding religion in the schools.

General Guidelines for Faith-based Activities in High Schools

- All faith-based activities will respect and comply with the *Education Act*, MOET Regulations and supporting Program Memoranda and Board policies.
- The HWDSB, through its InterFaith Advisory Committee, will monitor such activities.
- Principals will make every effort to facilitate the formation of, and provide space for, Faith Clubs and Prayer Activities.
- Volunteers involved in faith-based activities must comply with the HWDSB Volunteer Policy (such as obtaining a Police Vulnerable Sector screening). If there is a volunteer leader coming in the school, the Board will ensure that he or she is authorized to participate in the activity by their faith's supervisory body.
- Local faith groups participating in faith-based activities are defined as recognized religious groups registered with the Ontario Registry General and having charity status, the legal right to solemnize marriage, and Articles of Incorporation.
- Aboriginal cultural activity would be included in these guidelines.

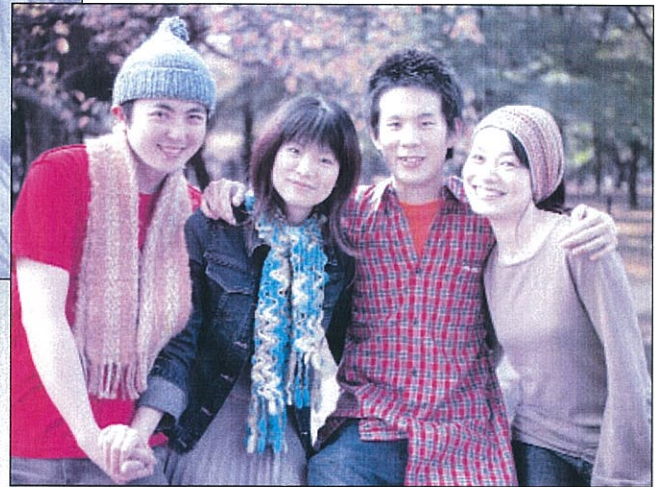
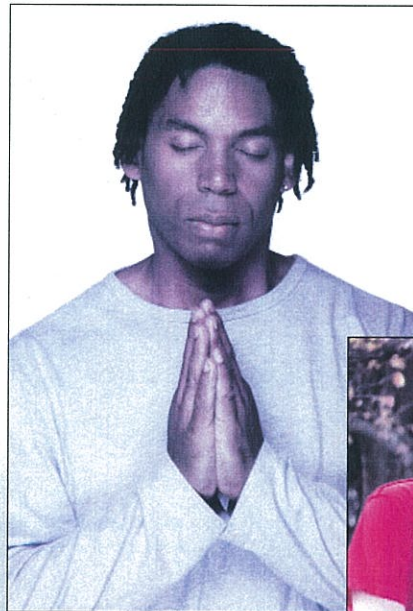


FAITH CLUBS AND PRAYER ACTIVITIES



Complaint Process

- A complaint will precipitate review of the activity by the Principal.
- A complaint will be facilitated by the Supervisory Officer responsible for “Equity”.
- The Interfaith Advisory Committee will review a complaint and a ruling may result in the Faith Club losing its right to meet in school if the activity does not meet the policies of the HWDSB.





FAITH CLUBS AND PRAYER ACTIVITIES

FAITH CLUBS



What is a “Faith Club”?

A Faith Club is like any other club that is established in a school. Normally such a club is initiated by student interest. Its general purpose is to explore issues related to faith and religion, such as ‘religion and violence’ or ‘religion/faith’s views on sexuality, peer pressure’, etc., or to explore any aspect of religious teachings, provided that there is some inclusion of inter-denominational and inter-faith perspectives. It meets on a regular basis during school hours (usually at lunch time or after regular instructional classes) in an approved location with the attendance of a designated Teacher-Advisor. It also fills out a “Student Faith Club Agenda” form each semester, which is then submitted to the Principal through the Teacher-Advisor and then forwarded to the InterFaith Advisory Committee for approval.

Guiding Principles for Faith Clubs

- The activity must not be indoctrinational nor be exclusive to any one particular faith (either in participants or in content – see Operating Procedures below).
- The activity must be open and accessible to all students on an equal basis.
- A Faith Club is an activity with a group of students who gather voluntarily with common interests.
- It is a pro-social activity that encourages learning and increased awareness and understanding of one’s own faith and the faith of others in a climate of tolerance and respect.
- It is an activity that provides a safe space for students to speak freely.
- The role of Faith Clubs is to:
 - ◆ Build character
 - ◆ Study versus practice
 - ◆ Expose versus impose
 - ◆ Instruct versus indoctrinate
 - ◆ Educate versus convert
 - ◆ Be academic versus devotional
 - ◆ Inform versus conform



FAITH CLUBS



Operating Procedures:

- Students, if they are under 18, must have parental permission to participate in a faith club. Students can attend a maximum of two meetings to explore the activity, but require parental permission to continue attending.
- Once a group is formed and a Teacher-Advisor identified, the club should review Policy 7.19 and formulate an agenda.
- The club may wish to have a regular outside volunteer leader. If this is the case, then that person *must* be an accredited volunteer (someone authorized to act in this role by his or her faith community's leadership).
- To comply with Ministry regulations and Board policies, club agendas must demonstrate exposure to *multi-faith perspectives*. A faith club will demonstrate multi-faith activity by including at least two other perspectives each year: one other denominational perspective and one other faith perspective, or two other faith perspectives.

Example: A club may be Christian and have a predominantly Baptist focus, but will invite a representative from another Christian denomination (e.g., Anglican, Presbyterian, Pentecostal) during one semester and a representative from another faith tradition, (e.g., Jewish, Hindu, Sikh) during the next semester.

Example: A club may be Christian and have a predominantly Baptist focus, but will invite a representative from another faith tradition (e.g., Jewish) during one semester and a representative from another faith tradition, (e.g., Hindu or Sikh) during the next semester.

Example: At least once per year the group must invite a representative from another faith tradition. The group could not invite two representatives from other Christian denominations (one each semester).

- Agendas must be student-driven in terms of both subject matter and the choice of how to implement the requirement for inclusion of a multi-faith perspective (which faiths to include, whether an outside accredited representative is brought in or someone from within the school, and when during the semester).
- Club agendas must be forwarded to IFAC who will ensure that the activity is in compliance with the above-stated regulations and provisions. (IFAC members can assist with identifying local speakers from different religions, if students wish.) See Appendix B-1.



FAITH CLUBS AND PRAYER ACTIVITIES

FAITH CLUBS



- Activities for Faith Clubs could include:
 - ◆ Discussions driven by student questions
 - ◆ Talks given by speakers brought into the school
 - ◆ Organizing religious festival celebrations (expositions, etc.) at school for fellow students
 - ◆ Organizing activity in support of community service projects
 - ◆ Sponsoring activities for students at risk

Role of the Teacher-Advisor:

- Monitor Faith Club activity according to policy
- Discuss with students members the nature of the policy and their responsibilities
- Communicate the positive goals of the activity (e.g., increasing awareness, appreciation, valuing diversity)
- Facilitating dialogue, whenever appropriate, and monitoring appropriate student behaviour





PRAYER ACTIVITY



What is prayer activity?

It is devotional in nature, often fulfilling a requirement of faith. It normally involves individuals gathered for the purpose of prayer/meditation. It may involve obligatory prayers, personal prayers, corporate (group) prayers (with or without a leader), silent prayer, chanting or meditation, and it may involve postures of standing, kneeling, prostration, bending, holding hands, or raising hands.

Guiding Principles

- Prayer is not to be used for club activity
- Prayer activity does not require a multi-faith component
- Prayer activity is normally engaged in as a religious obligation (requirement) or need; it is not a time for discussion
- Prayer activity must be student initiated

Operating Procedures

- A group or individual requesting permission for prayer activity must outline their objectives to the Principal
- A leader must be an accredited person, a teacher or Principal may support this student-initiated activity.
- Leaders of this activity will be accountable to the school Principal
- Participation in prayer activity requires:
 - ◆ Voluntary participation
 - ◆ Presence of a Teacher-Advisor
- Space for prayer activity and the presence of a Teacher-Advisor are allocated at the discretion of the Principal as resources permit.



OPENING EXERCISES



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Ontario Regulation 298 – Operations of Schools – General 4.(1) – 4.(4)

- 4 (1) This section applies with respect to opening and closing exercises in public elementary and in public secondary schools.
- (2) The opening or closing exercises may include the singing of *God Save the Queen* and may also include the following types of readings that impart social, moral or spiritual values and that are representative of Ontario’s multicultural society:
 1. Scriptural writings including prayers
 2. Secular writings
- (3) The opening or closing exercises may include a period of silence.
- (4) In the following circumstances, a pupil is not required to participate in the opening or closing exercises described in this section:
 1. In the case of a pupil who is less than 18 years old, if the pupil’s parent or guardian applies to the Principal of the school for an exemption from the exercises
 2. In the case of a pupil who is at least 18 years old, if the pupil applies to the Principal for an exemption from the exercises

- **Ministry of Education Policy Procedure Memo (PPM) 108 (1989)** states that public school boards may resolve to include in the opening or closing exercises readings or prayers from scriptural writings. The Ministry has compiled an online resource consisting of sample readings from scriptures and inspirational quotations from a variety of individuals and traditions. (See Resources section of this Handbook)

Suggestions

- In light of the emphasis on character education it would be helpful to encourage students to match such readings with the particular character traits whose development among the school population is being explicitly sought.
- Considering the Administrative Memorandum identifying “Key Holy Days”, “Holy Days” and “Religious Days of Significance” that is now distributed to schools at the beginning of each new school year, it would be educational and affirming for students for whom such religious holy days are significant to encourage matching readings from the resource book with the Key Holy Days of various religions.



CHARACTER EDUCATION



HWDSB has adopted the following values that are to be emphasized in their *Character Builds* program:

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Acceptance | Honesty |
| Caring | Integrity |
| Citizenship | Respect |
| Courage | Responsibility |
| Empathy | Trustworthiness |

The program offers an opportunity to mention in the classroom that faith communities promote such values among their members. Without allusion to any specific religion, teachers can make the point that a wide range of faiths hold very similar values and ideas. Inclusion of such references can lead to a wider interest in, acceptance of, and eventual understanding of various faiths, rather than fear and prejudice.

THE INTERFAITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (IFAC) TO HWDSB

This committee was established in 2004, following a number of consultations between Board members, community members and area religious leaders on the place of religion in the schools in general, and on religious clubs and prayer activity in particular. The IFAC provides not only advice to the Board and its schools in the establishment and practice of faith-based activities in schools, but a forum for the discussion of issues concerning religion and schools.

There are three scheduled meetings of the IFAC each school year, but special meetings can be called if situations arise which immediately require a Hamilton community interfaith perspective.

Mandate

The mandate of the InterFaith Advisory Committee to Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is to offer advice and make recommendations to the Board regarding matters related to religious activities, practices, and education in elementary and secondary schools, consistent with the *Education Act* and with policies of the HWDSB. The IFAC reviews and approves (or suggests alterations to) the proposed agendas of Faith Clubs.



INTERFAITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Membership

The IFAC consists of representatives from a wide range of different faiths and Christian denominations. In addition, representatives of principals and students are members of the IFAC. The term for membership on the IFAC is generally three (3) years.



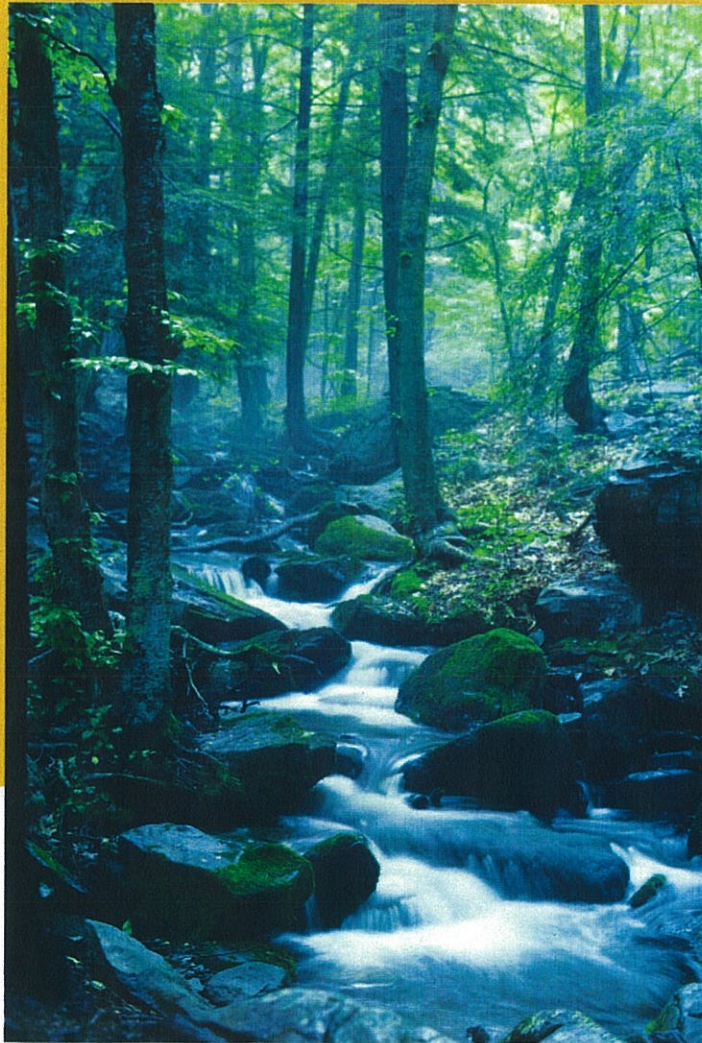
Student Membership

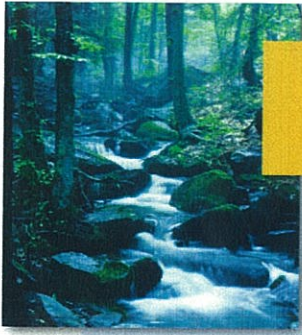
Two senior students from the HWDSB high schools are members of IFAC. Unlike other members, however, students are appointed on the recommendation of their Principals.

General Advice

- The school community should encourage, not discourage, the connection of students to their spiritual beliefs.
- Principals should be open and welcoming to the establishment by students of Faith Clubs that meet the Board's requirement within their schools, as well as to the practice of prayer activity according to the guidelines.
- Teacher-Advisors are encouraged to be flexible in the implementation of the students' Faith Club agenda (as long as they abide by the requirements of the Board).
- Questions from parents or others outside the school about Faith Clubs and Prayer Activity may, if a Principal or Teacher-Advisor wishes, be referred to the Supervisory Officer responsible for Equity. It is unnecessary for an adversarial atmosphere to develop.

APPENDICES





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Appendix A: Forms

- A-1 HWDSB Policy 7.19
- A-2 Faith Club Agenda Form
- A-3 Faith Club Activities Participation Permission Form
- A-4 Information from Hamilton Police Service Web site – Information re Request for Vulnerable Sector Screening
- A-5 Hamilton Police Service – Request for Vulnerable Sector Screening Form
- A-6 Volunteer letter template for Police Vulnerable Sector Screening

Appendix B: Resources

- B-1 List of Contacts – IFAC Speakers for Faith Clubs
- B-2 Web sites for multi-faith readings

Appendix C: InterFaith Advisory Committee Mandate & Membership Excerpts from *Education Act* Statutes and Regulations

- C-1 IFAC Mandate
- C-2 IFAC Membership
- C-3 Ministry of Education – *Education Act* – Ontario Regulation 298 (excerpt)
- C-4 Ministry of Education – Policy/Program Memorandum No. 112 (excerpt)

FAITH CLUB AND PRAYER ACTIVITIES

Policy No. 7.19

Date Approved: November 2004 • Revised September 2008 • Projected Review Date: November 2012

POLICY STATEMENT: It is the policy of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to support the values, beliefs and cultures within Hamilton-Wentworth by accommodating Faith Club and Prayer Activity in its schools.

RESPONSIBILITY: Supervisory Officer responsible for “Equity”

1.0 OVERALL PROCEDURES FOR FAITH-BASED ACTIVITIES:

- 1.1 All faith-based activities will respect and comply with the *Education Act*, Ministry of Education and Training Regulations and supporting Program Memorandums and Board polices/practices.
- 1.2 The Board, through the InterFaith Advisory Committee, will monitor activities.
- 1.3 All faith-based activities will have a Teacher-Advisor.
- 1.4 Role of Teacher-Advisor will be to:
 - act as a facilitator
 - monitor faith activity according to HWDSB Faith Club and Prayer Activities Policy
 - monitor appropriate student ‘behaviour’
 - communicate the positive goals of the activity: which increase awareness, appreciation and valuing diversity
 - Principals will make every effort to facilitate the formation of, and provide space for, the faith activity
- 1.5 Volunteers involved in faith-based activities must comply with Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Volunteer Policy, i.e., Hamilton Police Service Vulnerable Sector Screening, commonly referred to as a Police Check. The Board will ensure the volunteer/leader is authorized to participate in the activity by their faith supervisory body.
- 1.6 Faith-based activities are open to students of all faiths.
- 1.7 Local faith groups participating in faith-based activities:
 - are defined as recognized religious groups registered with the Ontario Registry General
 - have charity status
 - the legal right to solemnize marriage
 - have Articles of Incorporation
- 1.8 Aboriginal/Native cultural activity is recognized and included in this policy.

2.0 COMPLAINT PROCESS:

- 2.1 A complaint will precipitate a review of the activity by the Principal
- 2.2 A complaint will be facilitated by the Supervisory Officer responsible for “Equity”
- 2.3 The InterFaith Advisory Committee will review a complaint and a ruling may result in the Faith Club losing its right to meet in school if the activity does not meet the policies of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

3.0 FAITH CLUB ACTIVITY

3.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The activity:

- must not be indoctrination
- must not give primacy to any particular religious faith
- must be open and accessible to all students on an equal basis
- is for groups of students who gather voluntarily with a common interest
- is a time of encouragement, pro-social activity
- is a time for instruction, understanding and tolerance in terms of personal faith and the faiths held by others
- provides a safe place for students to speak freely
- develops an awareness of other faiths and beliefs

3.2 OPERATING PROCEDURES:

- Students, if they are under 18, must have parental permission to participate. Students can attend a maximum of two meetings to explore the activity, but require parental permission to continue attending.
- Agendas must be student driven and outline how the leader will facilitate the group and ensure multi-faith focus
- Agendas for each year must be forwarded to the InterFaith Advisory Committee (IFAC) who will ensure the activity is in compliance with the *Education Act*, Ministry of Education and Training Regulations and Board Policy for Faith Club and Prayer Activity
- Club agendas must demonstrate exposure to multi-faith activity. This translates to at least two denominations and at least one other major faith group activity. Faith representatives do not necessarily have to be present at each meeting, but the club agenda must demonstrate a multi-faith focus.
- Definition of multi-faith activity: Major faith groups such as Christians, Muslims, Hindu, etc., have sub-groups or denominations. Multi-faith representation equals a minimum of two denominations plus one other faith group, or three different major faith groups.

3.3 ACTIVITIES FOR FAITH CLUBS MUST BE THE RESULT OF A STUDENT-DRIVEN AGENDA AND MAY INCLUDE:

- pro-social activity supporting community
- pro-social activity for student celebration in one or more religious tenets
- full group activity with speakers
- activity driven by student questions
- sponsoring activities for students at risk
- expositions of various faith festivals

3.4 THE ROLE OF FAITH CLUBS IS TO:

- build character
- study versus practice
- expose versus impose
- instruct versus indoctrinate
- educate versus convert
- be academic versus devotional
- study versus teach
- raise awareness versus acceptance
- inform versus conform

3.5

3.4 STRUCTURES FOR FAITH CLUB ACTIVITY:

- May be acted out in a variety of structures, i.e., in full group activity/small group activity.
- All Faith Club activity will be considered part of a system network of faith club activity.
- Faith Clubs may exist that have a two-denominational focus. Examples of these clubs are:
 - ◆ Faith Club / Christian Perspective
 - ◆ Faith Club / Muslim Perspective
 - ◆ Faith Club / Hindu Perspective, etc.
- Each Faith Club must engage in one other denominational activity at least once per semester.
- Each Faith Club must engage in one other major faith group activity at least once per semester.

4.0 PRAYER ACTIVITY

4.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- The school community should encourage, not discourage, the connection of students to their spiritual beliefs
- This is an optional and voluntary activity
- Sharing time may take place proceeding corporate / individual prayer
- Prayer may be meditation, sitting in silence, listening to request, holding hands/raising of hands, kneeling, chanting, singing and music
- Content of activity must be positive for society, i.e., constructive, just and generous
- Prayer activity is a gathering of people to interact with each other and with God or guiding Spirit

4.1 OPERATING PROCEDURES:

4.2

- A time-allotted area will be provided for this activity.
- Leaders of this activity will be accountable to the School Principal.
- Group or individuals requesting permission for prayer/reflection activity must outline their objectives.
- A leader must be an accredited person with a completed Hamilton Police Service Vulnerable Sector Screening check according to Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Volunteer Policy.
- If this activity is led by a volunteer, this person must be approved by an accredited faith group according to Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Policy on Faith Club and Prayer Activity.

STUDENT FAITH CLUB AGENDA

Title of Faith Club: _____

School: _____ Date Submitted to IFAC: _____

Teacher-Advisor: _____

Name of Accredited Community Volunteer(s) and Faith Affiliation: _____

Vulnerable Sector Screening requested for volunteer(s) and verified by Principal: N/A

Student Contact Name(s): _____

Please list scheduled club activity for the year. Each semester, Faith Club's activity must include a minimum of two denominations plus one other faith group OR three different major faith groups OR one denomination and two major faith groups.

| SEMESTER ONE meeting dates | Identify accredited representatives (community or student) from other denominations who will be in attendance | Identify accredited representatives (community or student) from other faith groups who will be in attendance |
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| SEMESTER TWO meeting dates | Identify accredited representatives (community or student) from other denominations who will be in attendance | Identify accredited representatives (community or student) from other faith groups who will be in attendance |
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Faith Clubs are invited to provide feedback to the InterFaith Advisory Committee about activities, celebrations, etc.

Please submit Agenda to the InterFaith Advisory Committee (IFAC) via email to the Office of the Associate Director, c/o claire.vanderbeek@hwdsb.on.ca or fax 905-521-2517
For information/questions, phone 905-527-5092 ext. 2304.

OPERATING PROCEDURES:

- Agendas must be student driven and outline how the leader will facilitate the group and ensure a multi-faith focus.
- Agendas for each year must be forwarded to the InterFaith Advisory Committee (IFAC) who will ensure the activity is in compliance with the *Education Act*, Ministry of Education and Training Regulations and Board Guidelines for Faith Club and Prayer Activity.
- Club Agendas must demonstrate exposure to multi-faith activity. This translates to at least two denominations and at least one other major faith group activity. Faith representatives do not necessarily have to be present at each meeting, but the club agenda must demonstrate a multi-faith focus.
- Definition of multi-faith activity: Major faith groups such as Christians, Muslims, Hindu, etc., have sub-groups or denominations. Multi-faith representation equals a minimum of two denominations plus one other faith group, OR three different major faith groups OR one denomination and two major faith groups.

ACTIVITIES FOR FAITH CLUBS MUST BE THE RESULT OF A STUDENT-DRIVEN AGENDA AND MAY INCLUDE:

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- pro-social activity for student celebration in one or more religious tenets
- full group activity with speakers
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- sponsoring activities for students at risk
- expositions of various faith festivals

THE ROLE OF FAITH CLUBS IS TO:

- build character
- study versus practice
- expose versus impose
- instruct versus indoctrinate
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STRUCTURES FOR FAITH CLUB ACTIVITY:

- May be acted out in a variety of structures, i.e., in full group activity/small group activity.
- All Faith Club activity will be considered part of a system network of faith club activity.
- Faith Clubs may exist that have a two-denominational focus. Examples of these clubs are:
 - ◆ Faith Club / Christian Perspective
 - ◆ Faith Club / Muslim Perspective
 - ◆ Faith Club / Hindu Perspective, etc.

FAITH GROUPINGS: (denominations of a faith group are bulleted)

- Christian
 - ◆ Roman Catholic
 - ◆ Main Line Protestant (including United, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Anglican)
 - ◆ Evangelical (including Pentecostal, Baptist, Nazarene, Brethren in Christ, Salvation Army)
 - ◆ Peace (including Quaker, Mennonite, Plymouth Brethren)
 - ◆ Other Christian (including Gospel, Alliance, Christian Fellowship)
 - ◆ Eastern Orthodox (Greek, Ukrainian, Serbian, Syrian)
- First Nations
- Jewish
- Muslim
 - ◆ Shiite
 - ◆ Sunni
- Hindu / Jain
- Sikh
- Bahá'í
- Buddhist (including Pure Land, Zen/Chan, Theravadan, Tibetan Buddhism)
- Others: Unitarian, Mormons, Jehovah's Witness



FAITH CLUB ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION PERMISSION FORM

School Name and Contact Information: _____

To Parents:

In November, 2004, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board adopted Policy 7.19 regarding Faith Club and Prayer Activities. It is the policy of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to support the values, beliefs and cultures within Hamilton-Wentworth by accommodating Faith Club and Prayer Activity in its schools.

This Policy is available at the Board's Web site at www.hwdsb.on.ca/about_us/policies/approved/index.aspx and outlines these activities comply with the Education Act and supporting legislation.

Students, if they are under 18, must have parental permission to participate in Faith Club activities. Students can attend a maximum of two meetings to explore the activity, but require parental permission to continue attending if they are under age 18.

Your son/daughter _____ has indicated they would like to participate in a Faith Club at our school.

Please return the portion below to the school office to the attention of _____.

Thank you.

CUT HERE



Faith Club Activities Participation Permission

I, _____, give permission for my son / daughter

_____ to participate in a Faith Club from a

_____ perspective at _____ School
(faith/affiliation) (name)

Date: _____ Signature: _____

CUT HERE

From the Hamilton Police Service Web site

Information re Request for Vulnerable Sector Screening

To obtain a Vulnerable Sector Search, you have two options:

1. Attend the Records Business Center at 155 King William Street in Hamilton, fill out the appropriate form, show acceptable identification and pay the applicable fee. If the application is for a volunteer position, CAS, fostering, student registration or field placement (\$15.00 fee) proof of same must be shown (i.e. letter from the agency or school).
2. Download from www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca and complete the Request for Vulnerable Sector Screening form and mail it to Hamilton Police Service, P.O. Box 1060, L.C.D. 1, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 4C1, Attention: Records Screening Clerk. We will not process your request unless it is accompanied by a certified cheque or money order. (We do not accept personal cheques). If mailing in your application, please print legibly and complete all names in full (no initials). If the application is for a volunteer position, CAS, fostering, student registration or field placement (\$15.00 fee) proof of same must be shown (i.e. letter from the agency or school). A copy of the Vulnerable Sector Screening form is attached as an Appendix.

Once an application has been processed, the applicant must pick up the completed form in person, with two pieces of identification. Every applicant must have proper identification to verify their identity. In all cases, we insist on at least one piece of photo ID and another piece with a birth date and proof of current address. We do not accept S.I.N. cards or credit cards.

For further information, please call the Records Office at 905-546-4979.

| SERVICE | FEE | TURNAROUND TIME |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Volunteers & Students | \$15.00 | 30 Days |

Fees

Fees must be remitted to Hamilton Police Service at the time of request. HPS accepts cash, debit or credit card payments. **No personal cheques.**

From the HWDSB's Volunteer Participation in Board Activities Policy:

The Principal's Role:

In order for volunteers to undergo a Vulnerable Sector Screening, the Hamilton Police Service require a letter from the school confirming the person is seeking a volunteer position at the school. A template of this letter is included as an Appendix.

Hamilton Police Service

REQUEST FOR VULNERABLE SECTOR SCREENING

THIS SEARCH IS FOR INDIVIDUALS SEEKING A VOLUNTEER AND/OR EMPLOYMENT POSITION WITH CHILDREN OR VULNERABLE PERSON(S).

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OFFICE USE | DATE RECEIVED | Y | Y | M | M | D | D |
| | | | | | | | |

(PLEASE PRINT)

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------|-------------|--|------|-------------|-----|------|------------------|-------------------------|
| LAST NAME | | FIRST NAME | | MIDDLE NAME | | | | | | |
| MAIDEN NAME OR OTHER SURNAMES USED | | | | PLACE OF BIRTH (CITY, PROVINCE, OTHER) | | | | | | |
| D O B | Y | Y | M | M | D | D | SEX | AREA | TELEPHONE (RES.) | DRIVER'S LICENCE NUMBER |
| NUMBER | STREET | | APT. / UNIT | | CITY | POSTAL CODE | | | | |

(PROVIDE PREVIOUS ADDRESSES IF YOU DID NOT RESIDE AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS FOR MORE THAN FIVE YEARS)

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------------|------|-------------|
| NUMBER | STREET | APT. / UNIT | CITY | POSTAL CODE |
| NUMBER | STREET | APT. / UNIT | CITY | POSTAL CODE |
| NUMBER | STREET | APT. / UNIT | CITY | POSTAL CODE |

REASON FOR REQUEST: SCREENING FOR

EMPLOYMENT
 VOLUNTEER
 STUDENT PLACEMENT
 OTHER: _____

AUTHORIZATION, RELEASE AND WAIVER:

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE, AND CONSENT TO, THE FULL DISCLOSURE OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND RECORDS BY THE HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE, AND BY ANY OTHER POLICE AGENCY IN CANADA TO WHICH A COPY OF THIS FORM IS PROVIDED:

- A. CRIMINAL RECORD (ADULT)
 - B. CRIMINAL RECORD (YOUNG PERSON):*
 - C. RECORDS OF "NOT GUILTY; NOT CRIMINALLY RESPONSIBLE ON ACCOUNT OF MENTAL DISORDER."
 - D. CONVICTIONS, PENDING CHARGES AND ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS UNDER FEDERAL STATUTES AND PROVINCIAL STATUTES, WHERE AVAILABLE. (NOTE: INFORMATION MAINTAINED UNDER THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT AND THE COMPULSORY AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE ACT IS NOT INCLUDED).
 - E. RELEVANT OCCURRENCE REPORTS.
 - F. PROBATION, PROHIBITION AND OTHER JUDICIAL ORDERS.
- CONSENT FOR A CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK FOR A SEXUAL OFFENCE FOR WHICH A PARDON HAS BEEN GRANTED OR ISSUED. *(Not applicable for persons under the age of 21)*
- I consent to a search being made in the automated criminal records retrieval system maintained by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to find out if I have been convicted of, and been granted a pardon for, any of the sexual offences that are listed in the schedule to the Criminal Records Act. I understand that, as a result of this consent, if I am suspected of being the person named in a criminal record for one of the sexual offences listed in the schedule to the Criminal Records Act in respect of which a pardon was granted or issued, that record may be provided by the Commissioner of the Royal Mounted Police to the Solicitor General of Canada, who may then disclose all or part of the information contained in that record to a police service or other authorized body. That police service or authorized body will then disclose that information to me.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

* PURSUANT TO SECTION 119(1) OF THE YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT, A YOUTH RECORD CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE YOUNG PERSON TO WHOM THE RECORD RELATES AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF GRANTING A SECURITY CLEARANCE.

IN CONSIDERATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOREGOING AUTHORIZATION, I, FOR MYSELF, MY HEIRS, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS HEREBY RELEASE, WAIVE AND FOREVER DISCHARGE THE CITY OF HAMILTON, THE HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES BOARD, THE HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE, AND ALL THEIR AGENTS, OFFICERS, ASSIGNS, REPRESENTATIVES AND SUCCESSORS, OF AND FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY FOR SUCH DISCLOSURE, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS, DEMANDS, DAMAGES, COSTS, ACTIONS AND CAUSES OF ACTION, WHETHER IN LAW OR EQUITY, IN RESPECT OF DEATH, INJURY, LOSS OR DAMAGE OF ANY NATURE WHICH MAY BE SUSTAINED BY ME OR BY ANY OTHER PERSON, HOWSOEVER CAUSED OR ARISING, AS A RESULT OF, OR CONNECTED TO, THE RELEASE OF THIS INFORMATION.

FURTHERMORE, I WAIVE ALL RIGHTS, PRESENT AND FUTURE, RELATING TO THE RELEASE OF THE INFORMATION SET OUT HEREIN, AND UNDERSTAND THAT UPON DISCLOSURE OF SUCH INFORMATION, THE POLICE SERVICE AND ALL THE AFORESAID WAIVE ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE USE, APPLICATION AND/OR DISSEMINATION OF SAME BY ME.

THE INFORMATION LOCATED AND/OR RELEASED MAY OR MAY NOT PERTAIN TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS INQUIRY. POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION CAN ONLY BE CONFIRMED THROUGH SUBMISSION OF FINGERPRINTS.

DATE: _____ SEARCH RESULTS WILL BE PURGED IF NOT PICKED UP WITHIN 90 DAYS. _____ SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

OFFICE USE ONLY

ID SHOWN: YES NO CLERK # _____

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Valid Driver's Licence | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship Documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration Documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage Certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> Ontario Age of Majority Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Card (with photo) | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Card (with photo) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passport | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Status Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms Licence | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment I.D. (with photo) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Insurance/Ownership | | | |

PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS COLLECTED AND DISCLOSED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE POLICE SERVICES ACT AND WILL BE USED TO DISCLOSE PERSONAL INFORMATION TO THE APPLICANT. FEES, HOURS OF OPERATION AND OUR LOCATION CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE, WWW.HAMILTONPOLICE.ON.CA UNDER "PUBLIC SERVICES-RECORDS". ANY PERSON OR ORGANIZATION WHICH ACQUIRES INFORMATION RELATING TO AN APPLICATION FOR A POSITION SHALL NOT USE IT OR COMMUNICATE IT EXCEPT IN RELATION TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICANT. SCREENING FEES ARE **NON REFUNDABLE**.

130534 MAY07



Date:

To: Hamilton Police Service
155 King William Street
P. O. Box 1069, LCD 1
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 4C1

Please be advised that _____ is seeking a
volunteer position with Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

Yours truly,

Signature of School Principal or Designate

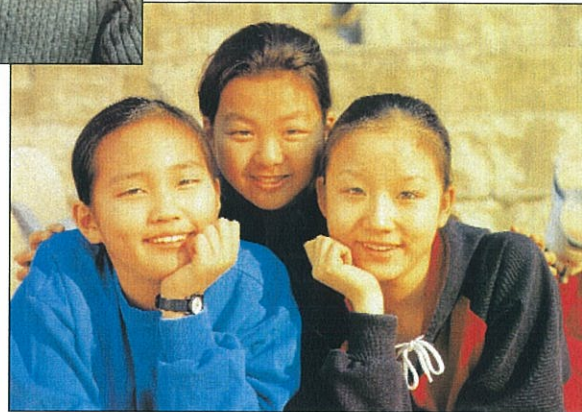
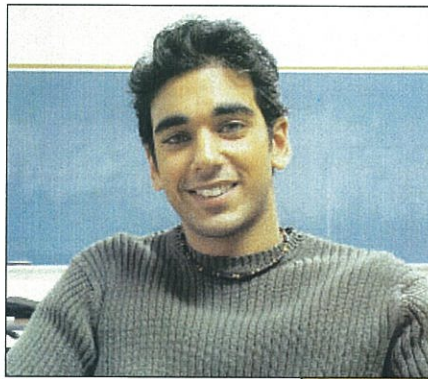
100 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 1H6 Tel: 905.527.5092

INTERFAITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPEAKERS FOR FAITH CLUBS

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| Anglican | Rev. Vicky Hedelius | vickyhedelius@hotmail.com 905-383-2951 |
| Baha'i | Pat Cameron | Pcameron6@cogeco.ca 905-627-1883 |
| Buddhist | Sister Tinh Quang | sistertinhquang@cogeco.ca 905-575-5976 |
| Hindu | Dr. Naresh Sinha | naresh@sinha.ca 905-390-1350 |
| Muslim | Syed Aziz Jafer | c/o 905-527-5092 x 2304 |
| Quaker | Beverly Shepard | beverly_shepard@sympatico.ca 905-659-6119 |
| Presbyterian | Rev. George Robertson | rev.george@bellnet.ca 905-689-8115 |
| Mormon | Ken Shoesmith | kshoesmith@cogeco.ca 905-628-2006 |
| Jewish | Madeleine Levy | justmadeleine@sympatico.ca 905.648.0951 |
| Pentecostal | Rev. Jason Small | jason@communitychurch.ca 905-905-296-3619 |
| Hamilton Interfaith Council (other faiths not listed) | Anne Pearson | pearsonam@sympatico.ca 905-628-6180 |
| Other Christian denominations | Joyce Bellous | bellousj@mcmaster.ca 905-572-7530 |

WEB SITES FOR MULTI-FAITH READINGS

- 1993 Resource Guide: Opening and Closing Exercises in Ontario Public Schools (79 pp.): www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/resource/ecu93105.pdf
- 2006: Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education (reviews history of religious education in Ontario). www.ecumenicalstudycommission.ca/htm/history.php
- For a substantial listing of multi-faith prayers by subject matter, see www.Beliefnet.com
- Interfaith Resource Kit: www.anglican2.ca/faith/relationships/irk.htm
- Guidelines for Interfaith dialogue: www.anglican2.ca/faith/relationships/idf-guidelines.htm



INTERFAITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MANDATE

The mandate of the InterFaith Advisory Committee of the Board is to make recommendations to the Board regarding matters related to religious activities, practice, and education in elementary and secondary schools, consistent with the *Education Act* and with policies of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

COMPOSITION

The membership of the InterFaith Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Board and an effort will be made to reflect the diversity of Hamilton's religious communities and cultures, as well as gender balance and consist of:

- One representative from each of no more than 15 Faith Groups that operate locally within the area of jurisdiction of the Board. Local faith groups participating in faith-based activities are defined as recognized religious groups registered with the Ontario Registry General, have charity status, the legal right to solemnize marriage, and have articles of incorporation. A representative of Canada's First Nations is also entitled to be included.
- A representative of the Hamilton Interfaith Group
- Two trustees appointed by the Board
- Two senior high school student representatives representing different faith groups, appointed on the recommendation of their principals. Will endeavour to have one female and one male.
- Non-voting members will include one elementary and one secondary school principal representative, the superintendent responsible for the portfolio and representatives of other interested organizations recommended by the Board

QUALIFICATIONS

Except for student representatives, a member of the IFAC must be a Canadian citizen, 18 years of age or older, a resident within the area of jurisdiction of the Board and a public school board elector. A person is not qualified to be a voting member of the IFAC if he/she is employed by the Board.

TERMS OF OFFICE

The members of the Committee shall hold office for a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms. The Board may fill vacancies for the remainder of the term of the vacancy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each member is expected to:

1. contribute to building positive relationships between faith groups and the Board, between students and staff, and among members of the Committee
2. identify opportunities and be sensitive to research which strengthen cooperation between our faith community and the Board
3. present to the Committee the questions, concerns, issues and suggestions of the faith group he/she represents, regarding the programs or services of the Board
4. be knowledgeable of the relevant laws and policies regarding education about religion in Ontario's public schools.
5. consider the well-being of all students
6. respect the decisions of the Committee and the Board
7. uphold human rights principles and abide by the law
8. respect the rights of privacy of any individual whose concerns are brought to the Committee
9. make motions for debate and decision
10. Attend meetings on a regular basis and inform the IFAC chair or secretary when he/she cannot attend a meeting. If a member fails to attend three meetings in a row without sufficient cause the Board will notify their Faith Group.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Quorum: A quorum is defined as the majority of the members of the Committee.

Meeting Dates/Times: Meetings shall be held in October, February and May each year or at the call of the Chair. The Committee will call an open consultative meeting once annually, to which all community faith leaders will be invited to contribute suggestions and concerns.

Rules of Order: The appropriate rules of the Board shall govern the order and conduct of the meeting of the Committee.

Election of the Chair / Vice-Chair: At the first meeting of the Committee, the members shall elect one of their members as chair and one of their members as vice-chair for a one-year term. The Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair in the Chair's absence.

Voting: Every member present at a meeting shall have one vote. The Chair may vote with the membership. In the case of a tie vote, the motion shall be lost.

DUTIES OF THE BOARD

1. The Board shall make available to the IFAC personnel and facilities necessary for the proper functioning of the Committee.
2. The Board shall provide the members of the IFAC with timely information and orientation regarding Ministry and Board policies and Board decisions relating to religious activities, practice, and education in the schools.
3. Prior to making a decision on a recommendation made by the IFAC, the Board shall provide an opportunity for IFAC to be heard by the Board or any other committee of the Board to which the recommendation is referred.
4. It is the Board's responsibility to communicate its decisions based on the IFAC recommendations.

Suggested initial faith group representation

Should preferably include those who have been attending the recent meetings, and those who have demonstrated the ability to express their opinions with due respect to the rest of the group. Should be representative of the size and diversity of the various religious communities of the city, and include especially those who may be subject to particular discriminations or who have had particular concerns in the past. Some of the faith groups represented could change every three years.

Faith Groupings

- Christian: (Note: one IFAC representative per bulleted sub-group)
 - ◆ Roman Catholic
 - ◆ Main Line Protestant (including United, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Anglican)
 - ◆ Evangelical (including Pentecostal, Baptist, Nazarene, Brethren in Christ, Salvation Army)
 - ◆ Peace (including Quaker, Mennonite, Plymouth Brethren)
 - ◆ Other Christian (including Gospel, Alliance, Christian Fellowship)
 - ◆ Eastern Orthodox (Greek, Ukrainian, Serbian, Syrian)
- First Nations
- Jewish
- Muslim – Shiatt and Sunni
- Hindu / Jain
- Sikh
- Bahá'í
- Buddhist (including Pure Land, Zen/Chan, Theravadan, Tibetan Buddhism)
- Others: Unitarian, Mormons, Jehovah's Witness

Once a local Faith Group has been identified; the faith supervisory body will be asked to authorize a member to participate on the InterFaith Advisory Committee.

INTERFAITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

| ORGANIZATION | FAITH | REPRESENTATIVE |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| Holy Trinity | Anglican | Rev. Vicky Hedelius |
| | Baha'i | Pat Cameron |
| Blue Heron Dharma Centre | Buddhist | Sister Tinh Quang |
| | Hindu Community | Dr. Naresh Sinha |
| Muslim Association of Hamilton | Muslim | Syed Aziz Jafer |
| Religious Society of Friends | Quaker | Beverly Shepard |
| Knox Presbyterian | Presbyterian | Rev. George Robertson |
| The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints | Mormon | Ken Shoesmith |
| UJA Federation of Hamilton | Jewish | Madeleine Levy |
| Hamilton Interfaith Council | | Anne Pearson |
| McMaster Divinity College | | Joyce Bellous |
| | Pentecostal | Rev. Jason Small |
| HWDSB | HWPA rep | Sean Malcolmson |
| HWDSB | OPC-21 rep | Lawrie Cook |
| HWDSB | Students | David Kravetsky Rani Maraj Awish Aslam |
| HWDSB | Trustee | Lillian Orban |
| HWDSB | Associate Director | Ken Bain |

Excerpt from:

Education Act Statutes and Regulations

Ontario Regulation 298 – Operation of Schools – General

RELIGION IN SCHOOLS

27. Sections 28 and 29 do not apply to a Roman Catholic board or to a Protestant separate school board. O. Reg. 191/04, s. 8.
28. (1) A board may provide in grades one to eight and in its secondary schools an optional program of education about religion. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298, s. 28 (1).
- (2) A program of education about religion shall,
- (a) promote respect for the freedom of conscience and religion guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and
 - (b) provide for the study of different religions and religious beliefs in Canada and the world, without giving primacy to, and without indoctrination in, any particular religion or religious belief. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298, s. 28 (2).
- (3) A program of education about religion shall not exceed sixty minutes of instruction per week in an elementary school. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298, s. 28 (3).
29. (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), a board shall not permit any person to conduct religious exercises or to provide instruction that includes indoctrination in a particular religion or religious belief in a school. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298, s. 29 (1).
- (2) A board may enter into an agreement with a Roman Catholic board that permits the Roman Catholic board to use space and facilities to conduct religious exercises or provide religious instruction for the purposes of the Roman Catholic board. O. Reg. 191/04, s. 9.
- (3) A board may permit a person to conduct religious exercises or to provide instruction that includes indoctrination in a particular religion or religious belief in a school if,
- (a) the exercises are not conducted or the instruction is not provided by or under the auspices of the board;
 - (b) the exercises are conducted or the instruction is provided on a school day at a time that is before or after the school's instructional program, or on a day that is not a school day;
 - (c) no person is required by the board to attend the exercises or instruction; and
 - (d) the board provides space for the exercises or instruction on the same basis as it provides space for other community activities. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298, s. 29 (3).
- (4) A board that permits religious exercises or instruction under subsection (3) shall consider on an equitable basis all requests to conduct religious exercises or to provide instruction under subsection (3). R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 298, s. 29 (4).

POLICY/PROGRAM MEMORANDUM No. 112

Date of Issue: December 6, 1990

Effective : January 1, 1991

Subject: EDUCATION ABOUT RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

I. Background

On January 30, 1990, the Ontario Court of Appeal unanimously struck down subsection 28(4) of Regulation 262 concerning religious education in the public elementary schools. The court ruled that the subsection infringed on the freedom of conscience and religion guaranteed by section 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Neither the subsection nor the court decision applied to schools operated by the Roman Catholic separate school boards.

Section 29 of Regulation 262, regarding provision of religious instruction by clergy or designates in the public secondary schools, was not before the court, and the court's ruling did not apply expressly to that section. However, subsequent advice by legal counsel indicates that the principles outlined in the decision make section 29 equally untenable.

In its decision, the court made it very clear that subsection 28(4) of the regulation was invalid because it permitted the teaching of a single religious tradition as if it were the exclusive means through which to develop moral thinking and behaviour. The court also ruled that education designed to teach about religion and to foster moral values without indoctrination in a particular religious faith would not contravene the charter.

In distinguishing between religious indoctrination and education about religion, the court made the following statement:

While this is an easy test to state, the line between indoctrination and education, in some instances, can be difficult to draw. With this in mind, it may be of assistance to refer to the following more detailed statement of the distinction:

The school may sponsor the study of religion, but may not sponsor the practice of religion.

The school may expose students to all religious views, but may not impose any particular view.

The school's approach to religion is one of instruction, not one of indoctrination.

The function of the school is to educate about all religions, not to convert to any one religion.

The school's approach is academic, not devotional.

The school should study what all people believe, but should not teach a student what to believe.

The school should strive for student awareness of all religions, but should not press for student acceptance of any one religion.

The school should seek to inform the student about various beliefs, but should not seek to conform him or her to any one belief.

Subsequent to the court's ruling, an interim policy for public elementary schools, dated February 28, 1990, was established, whereby boards were permitted to provide programs in education about religion in the time previously used during the school day, as long as these programs were in accordance with the court's ruling. Boards of education were also advised that they could continue to provide space outside the school day, as they do for various community-related activities, if parents requested that their children be taught religion by clergy or designates. This interim policy for elementary schools was intended to remain in effect only until policy considerations related to the public elementary and secondary schools were finalized.

II. Permanent Policy

The Ministry of Education will amend sections 28 and 29 of Regulation 262 to reflect the following permanent policy, which will apply to public elementary and secondary schools:

1. Boards of education may provide programs in education about religion in Grades 1 to 8 during the school day for up to 60 minutes per week.
2. Boards of education may continue to provide optional credit courses in World Religions in secondary schools, as specified in the curriculum guideline entitled History and Contemporary Studies, Part C: Senior Division, Grades 11 and 12, 1987. The program described in the guideline meets the court's definition of permissible education about religion.
3. Schools and programs, including programs in education about religion, under the jurisdiction of boards of education must meet both of the following conditions:
 - a) They must not be indoctrinational.
 - b) They must not give primacy to any particular religious faith.
4. Boards of education may continue to provide space before the beginning or after the close of the instructional program of the school day for indoctrinational religious education. Given the provisions for equality of treatment in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, boards choosing this option must make space available on an equitable basis to all religious groups.

This policy will come into effect on January 1, 1991.

III. Purpose

The purpose of programs in education about religion is to enable students to acquire knowledge and awareness of a variety of the religious traditions that have shaped and continue to shape our world. The programs enable individuals to understand, appreciate, and respect various types of religious beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour.

The purpose of these programs is not to instil the beliefs of any particular religion. It is the prerogative of individual pupils and their families to decide which religious beliefs they should hold. Indoctrinational religious education has no place in the curriculum or programs of public elementary and secondary schools of the province.

IV. Content

Since the world's religions are many and varied, a particular program in education about religion cannot be expected to include every one of them. As a minimum, programs in any grade should include a balanced consideration of world religions that have continuing significance for the world's people.

Both content and method should be appropriate to the ages and levels of maturity of the pupils. In developing programs of education about religion, consideration may be given to various organizational frameworks.

V. Resources

The Ministry of Education will develop a resource document to assist boards of education in developing programs in education about religion for elementary schools.

Programs for the secondary schools will continue to be developed in accordance with History and Contemporary Studies, Part C: Senior Division, Grades 11 and 12, 1987.

VI. Context

This permanent policy and the forthcoming amendments to Regulation 262 are to be understood within the context of the long-established vision of the public elementary and secondary schools as places where people of diverse backgrounds can learn and grow together. The public schools are open and accessible to all on an equal basis and founded upon the positive societal values which, in general, Canadians hold and regard as essential to the well-being of our society. These values transcend cultures and faiths, reinforce democratic rights and responsibilities, and are founded on a fundamental belief in the worth of all persons.