

MONITORING REPORT FOR BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICIES APRIL 2016

Policy Name: Students Growing in Catholic
Faith Values

Policy Number: E.2

Policy Type: Ends

Date Approved: June 26, 2000

I interpret the End “Students Growing in Catholic Faith Values” to mean that students within our District schools acquire the necessary academic outcomes described in the Alberta Program of Studies but within the context of Catholic faith values permeating all subject areas and all that we do as a Catholic school system. The CCSSA (Council of Catholic School Superintendents) utilizes a committee of REN (Religious Education Network), our Religious Education Coordinator is the District representative, to peruse subject area curricula and to make recommendations for changes designed to give a Catholic context to the various curricula required by Alberta Education. These recommendations are then vetted by the Executive Director at ACSTA and the Bishop Liaison to the ACSTA prior to being distributed to the Catholic School Districts for implementation.

What we “do” as a Catholic system, as indicated in our programs and initiatives, can be found in the following subsets to this overarching End. Therefore, I further interpret “Students understand the relationship between Catholic Christian faith and human values” to mean that:

- Our anti-bullying programs are integrated into a Catholic vision;

Existing anti-bullying programs promote not only tolerance but also understanding of how we should treat each other as all being part of God’s children.

- Our virtue and character-formation programs are integrated into the same vision;
- Our counselors work with our students with a pastoral perspective, one that is proactive, sees the whole person and respects and works with their spirituality where called for;
- Our discipline procedures and philosophy integrate human values within our Catholic faith;
Our virtue and discipline programs are designed to go beyond punishment and incorporate an element of compassion and discipleship into our consequences for misbehaviour. This is in keeping with our value of maintaining and respecting each person’s human dignity.
- Mentoring is an increasingly important and explicit dimension of our education and is undertaken from a faith perspective, valuing in each student as created in God’s image and part of God’s family;
- Our retreats for high school are an integration of human values and faith;
- Our Religious Education Coordinator and the High School staff lead student retreats are at high school level. While encompassing elements of prayer and meditation, the main focus of these retreats is on providing students with an understanding of our faith values and an opportunity to grow in them.
- Our core values integrate faith and human values.

- Our FNMI program values Indigenous spirituality within the context of Catholic faith.

Likewise, I further interpret “Students perceive faith as a free response to the gift of God Himself” to mean that:

- Our catechetical programs are always conceived as an invitation for the students to encounter God in freedom;
- Our catechetical programs are focused on the life of the Trinity which is grace for us in the Spirit of Christ;
- Students are always invited and not forced into the gift of daily and regular prayer in their schools;
- Faith is embodied in growth in virtue, a free acceptance of God’s Spirit – this is the approach of our philosophy of discipline and character formation.

While participation in our liturgies and prayer life at school is always viewed as an invitation to be part of our faith community, non-Catholics who wish to enroll in our system do so with the understanding that their children are respectfully present during prayer, religion classes, liturgies, etc.

Furthermore, I interpret “Students experience the person of Christ in their lives” to mean that:

- Students experience regular prayer and liturgies whose center is Christ;
- Our discipline policy is conceived of as being a disciple, a follower of Christ;
- Our catechetical programs are focused on the mystery of Christ and ask for prayer as part of the students’ encounter with Christ;
- Our core values are seen as a life in the Spirit of Christ

An example of the above statements would be that students in our schools can expect to find Christ referred to in any of their subject areas and not just in religion class. This would be as a result of our belief in the permeation of our faith throughout our school experience and not just in one respect of the student’s school day.

Finally, I interpret “Students’ daily lives exemplify faith values” to mean that:

- Our discipline philosophy guiding students is faith-based;
- Our core values call for students to live their life based on faith;
- Regular prayer and service and charitable activities exemplify faith values in our students’ lives.

Examples of this interpretation are found daily as our students engage in activities designed to give of themselves to assist others who are less fortunate (Santa’s Anonymous, Food Bank, Fair Trade Market, Share Lent, Backpacks for the Homeless, Out of School Care Sock program, Teens for Change, etc.)

I certify that the above information is accurate as of April 11, 2018.

George McGuigan
Superintendent of Schools