

DEALING WITH SENSITIVE ISSUES IN THE SCHOOL

Background

The District adheres to the principle that parents are the primary educators of their children and thus complements their role in promoting the values and traditions of the Catholic faith. A basic value in the Catholic tradition is that all persons are made in the image of God and therefore all are worthy of dignity. Life is a sacred gift and all students will be supported with compassion, consideration and respect.

Sensitive issues often arise when working with students in any subject area. Sensitive issues in the area of human sexuality may include expectant parents and issues of confidentiality, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, post-abortion syndrome and same sex attraction. Because the concept of permeation recognizes that Catholic identity finds expression in every dimension of a Catholic school, all day-to-day activities will be experienced as authentically Catholic. Sensitive issues will be addressed in the context of healthy lifestyle choices that represent Roman Catholic Church teachings. Teachers are responsible for witnessing to their faith in all areas of school life including those dealing with sensitive issues.

Procedures

1. The District expects that all teachers will support parents in their role as primary educators by presenting with clarity the teachings of the Catholic Church when addressing any sensitive issues.
 - 1.1 Any position contrary to the teachings of the Catholic faith is unacceptable.
 - 1.2 In discussions with parents, teachers must reflect the District's expectations.
2. All teachers new to the District will participate in an orientation session on dealing with sensitive issues.
 - 2.1 All teachers new to teaching the human sexuality component of the Religious Education program are required to attend an in-service on this topic offered by the Instructional Services Religious Education and Family Life.
3. All resource persons from outside agencies who are working with students in the District where sensitive issues may arise, are required to participate in an orientation session which will give Catholic perspectives and District expectations on such issues.
 - 3.1 Presenters will respect the integrity of faith-based messages and if concerns arise during the presentation, the teacher needs to bring this to the attention of the Principal and/or Instructional Services personnel.

4. The Superintendent or designate will approve all outside presenters as well as all printed and audio-visual material on sensitive issues.
 - 4.1 No one will be included as a resource person and no resources will be utilized that contravene the teachings of the Catholic Church.
 - 4.2 When presentations are made, each teacher will remain with his/her class and will undertake suitable follow-up in areas where this is necessary.

Approved: June 14, 2018

Reference: Section 1, 2, 3, 16.2, 18, 20, 39, 50.1, 59, 60, 61, 113, 124 School Act
Alberta Bill of Rights
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12
General Directory for Catechesis