

**DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**BOARD POLICY / REGULATIONS**

**Board Policy Number:** 7.14  
**Subject:** Opening and/or Closing Exercises  
**Effective Date:** (378) July 24, 2001; Revised (065) January 25, 2011

It is the policy of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board that all opening and/or closing exercises in schools under the Board's jurisdiction be in accordance with Section 304 of the *Education Act*, R.S.O.1990, c.E.2 as amended, and Regulation 435/00, and promote the distinctiveness, values and mission of our system.

**REGULATIONS**

**7.14 Opening and/or Closing Exercises**

The policy shall be in accordance with provisions of Bill 157 of the Education Amendment Act (Keeping our Kids Safe at School, 2009), Ontario Regulation 298 and attendant amendments, and, the Mission Statement of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board.

Formal prayer shall form part of every opening and/or closing exercise.

Scriptural/spiritual readings may form part of every opening and/or closing exercise.

Secular readings or recitations may form part of every opening and/or closing exercise but may not replace scriptural/spiritual readings.

The singing of the National Anthem, *O Canada*, shall form part of every opening and/or closing exercise.

The Principal may decide whether the opening and/or closing exercise at the school will include the recitation of the *Pledge of Citizenship*.

The Principal shall consult the School Council prior to making his or her initial decision about the recitation of the *Pledge of Citizenship*, and the consultation shall also occur at the commencement of each successive school year as part of the annual review of the decision respecting the recitation of the *Pledge of Citizenship*.

If the Principal determines that the *Pledge of Citizenship* is to be recited - only the authorized version of the pledge - The Canadian Oath of Citizenship - as established under federal legislation (Citizenship of Canada Act) shall be recited.

A pupil is not required to sing *O Canada* or recite the *Pledge of Citizenship* -

a) in the case of a pupil who is less than 18 years old, if the pupil's parent or guardian applies to the Principal to be exempted from doing so;

b) in the case of a pupil who is at least 18 years old, if the pupil applies to the Principal to be exempted from doing so.