



<u>DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD</u> <u>BOARD POLICY</u>	
BOARD POLICY NUMBER:	P-3004
SUBJECT:	Religious Studies Courses - Expectations for Secondary Students
REFERENCE:	GAP2007 Request for Exemption from Religious Studies Courses
EFFECTIVE DATE:	(070) January 22, 2013
AMENDED DATE:	(141) April 26, 2018

*Thus you shall salute him: "Peace be to you, and peace be to your house,
and peace be to all that you have." 1 Samuel 25:6*

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (the Board) believes in the dignity of all people and their equality as children of God. The Board's mandate, beyond meeting the Ministry of Education's goals regarding student achievement and well-being, is to model the entire syllabus of the school on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Given this distinctiveness, all courses in all subject areas in a Catholic secondary school are taught from a Catholic perspective. As such, the Board holds specific expectations for all students admitted.

Students registering in a secondary school in the Board will be required to register for one religion course in each year of attendance.

Students enrolled in a Catholic school are expected to participate fully in the faith life of the school which includes any religious program, course or activity with a substantial component of religious content (i.e., liturgies, masses, retreats, etc.).

"Open access" students are persons who are qualified to be resident pupils in respect of a secondary school operated by a public board who attend a secondary school operated by a Roman Catholic Board.

Under section 42(13) of the *Education Act*, there is an eligibility requirement for an exemption:

42. (13) [...] no person who is qualified to be a resident pupil in respect of a secondary school operated by a public board who attends a secondary school operated by a Roman Catholic board shall be required to take part in any program or course of study in religious education on written application to the board of,

(a) the parent or guardian of the person;

- (b) in the case of a person who is 16 or 17 years old who has withdrawn from parental control, the person himself or herself;
- (c) in the case of a person who is 18 years or older, the person himself or herself.

The intent of section 42(13) is to accommodate Open Access students who choose Catholic secondary schools for their education.

In order to qualify to be a Resident Pupil that can attend a Catholic School a student must:

1. live within the boundary
2. the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must be a Public School Supporter (or, if the student is 18 years or older or 16/17 and withdrawn, the student must be a Public School Supporter)

Therefore, to be an Open Access Student that qualifies for an exemption under Section 42(13), a student's parent/guardian (or the student, as applicable) must be a Public School Supporter.

Students who are not "open access" students are not eligible to obtain a religious exemption under the ***Education Act*** and this procedure.