
HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION**POLICY HANDBOOK**

Policy Code: HGAE
Policy Title: Religion & Human Sexuality
Cross Reference: HNB, HGAC, HGAD
Legal Reference: *Education Act 58 & 58.1,*
Adoption Date: February 26, 1997
**Amendment or Re-
affirmation Date:** **January 23, 2023**

POLICY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION SUPPORTS PARENTS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILDREN FROM RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTION AND/OR EXERCISES AND SHALL AS REQUIRED BY THE EDUCATION ACT PROVIDE NOTICE TO A PARENT OF A STUDENT WHERE COURSES, PROGRAMS OF STUDY, INSTRUCTION, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, OR EXERCISES, INCLUDE SUBJECT-MATTER THAT DEALS PRIMARILY AND EXPLICITLY WITH RELIGION OR HUMAN SEXUALITY.

THE BOARD ACCEPTS A COOPERATIVE ROLE WITH THE HOME AND SHALL EXEMPT STUDENTS WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY WHEN PARENTS MAKE A WRITTEN REQUEST.

GUIDELINES

1. The matter of process regarding the commencement and cessation of Board directed recitation of the Lord's prayer as part of the opening day will be dealt with in policy HNA.

REGULATIONS

1. The Board permits persons other than teachers to provide religious instruction or exercises to its students with principal approval.
2. Schools may access a health professional to assist with the delivery of the curriculum outcomes under the supervision of a teacher.
3. The Board will adhere to Section 58 and 58.1 of the Education Act which requires boards to provide parents with notice (see Appendix A) indicating that a particular outcome or component of a course contains subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality prior to commencement of instruction.
 - 3.1. The principal shall decide if parent information is best distributed through the provision of written information sent home or a parent meeting.
 - 3.2. Such notice must allow the parent enough time to request that their child be included or exempt from taking part via an exemption form provided by the school (see Appendix B).

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4. Parent notification does not apply to incidental or indirect references to religion, religious themes, or human sexuality in a course, program of study, instruction or exercises or in the use of instructional materials
5. Courses requiring notification include:
 - 5.1. Career and Life Management;
 - 5.2. Reproduction and Readiness for Parenting, HCS3050;
 - 5.3. Developing Maturity & Independence, HSS1040;
 - 5.4. Health and Life Skills (Grades 7 through 9);
 - 5.5. Physical Education and Wellness;
 - 5.6. religious courses and
 - 5.7. some locally developed courses if they contain subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality.
6. Where a parent makes a written request, teachers shall exempt the student, without academic penalty, and allow the student
 - 6.1. to leave the classroom or place where the instruction, course or program of study is taking place or the instructional materials are being used for the duration of the part of the instruction, course or program of study, or the use of the instructional materials, that includes the subject-matter; or
 - 6.2. to remain in the classroom or place without taking part in the instruction, course or program of study or using the instructional materials, whichever is preferred by the parent.

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NOTICE FORM UNDER SECTION 58.1 OF THE EDUCATION ACT

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child is currently enrolled in a course or educational program that [circle one]:

- a) includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with _____
[specify religion or human sexuality]; or
- b) uses an instructional material or exercise that includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with _____ [specify religion or human sexuality].

The subject matter is contained in the following areas: [identify the theme/outcome of the course of study, educational program, or instructional material, or exercise, that contains the subject matter].

The purpose for the inclusion of this subject matter in the course of study, educational program or instructional material or exercise is: [identify the learning outcome associated with the identified subject matter].

Instruction involving the subject matter will be provided on _____ [specify date and time].

Pursuant to section 58.1(2) of the Education Act, you as a parent/guardian may request that your child be excluded from the above-identified instruction, without academic penalty, by having your child either:

- a) leave the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place or where the instructional material is being used for the duration of that part of the instruction; or
- b) remain in the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place without taking part in the instruction or use of instructional material.

In order to exercise this option, you must sign and return the attached exemption form to _____ [specify individual] on or before the date of the instruction indicated above. If this form is not returned before that date, your child will be included in the instruction above.

If you would like additional information about the content of this notification, please contact

_____ [specify individual]

_____ [identify Principal]

POLICY HGAE – Religion and Human Sexuality, Cont’d.

STUDENT EXEMPTION UNDER SECTION 58.1 OF THE EDUCATION ACT

TO: Principal/Teacher of _____ [identify school].

In response to the notice provided to me by the Horizon School Division dated _____ [date of notice] indicating that a course of study or educational program in which my child is enrolled, or an instructional material or exercise used in a course of study or educational program in which my child is enrolled, includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with _____ [specify religion or human sexuality], I, _____ [name of parent/legal guardian], in accordance with section 58.1(2) of the Education Act, hereby request that my child, _____ [name of child], be excluded from the instruction, exercise or the use of instructional material identified in the notice.

I request that my child: (check relevant box)

A) Leave the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place or where the instructional material is being used for the duration of that part of the instruction.

OR

B) Remain in the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place without taking part in the instruction or use of instructional material.

I confirm that I am the parent/legal guardian of _____ [name of child] and have chosen to exercise my option to have my child excluded from the instruction described in the notice from _____ School [name of school] on the dates indicated in the notice. I also confirm that it is my obligation to ensure that this form is returned to the school principal/teacher on or before the date of the instruction indicated in the notice.

The child to whom this exemption notice applies is: _____ [name of child]
Grade: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian

Date