



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS – ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY

Administrative Procedure #: APE007

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is a Catholic learning community committed to educating students in faith-focused learning environments so they may become contributing citizens of the world, living out the Gospel message on a daily basis. The NCDSB has a mandate to provide Catholic education to the students registered in its schools, a right recognized by the Ministry of Education. In respect of all applicable regulations of the *Education Act*, the Admission policies and procedures of the NCDSB are created to support inclusivity while maintaining the unique Catholic nature of our schools.

REFERENCES

Northeastern Catholic District School Board, Board Policy:

E-4: Admission of Students

E-2: Prevalent Medical Conditions

Northeastern Catholic District School Board, Administrative Procedures:

APE0015 Prevalent Medical Conditions

Education Act

Joint Protocol for Student Achievement

DEFINITIONS

Right of Attendance:

As referenced in the *Education Act*, the right of attendance is granted to all elementary school-aged children whose parent(s)/guardian(s) are eligible and who direct their taxes in support of an English Catholic School board.

Compulsory Attendance:

Every person who attains the age of six years on or before the first school day in September in any year shall attend an elementary or secondary school on every school day from the first school day in September in that year until the person attains the age of 18 years, or graduates with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Age of Admission:

To be registered and admitted to Junior Kindergarten, a child must attain the age of 4 years on or before the 31st day of December of that calendar year. A student may attend school until the last school day in June in the year in which they reach 21 years of age.

Open Access:

As referenced in the *Education Act*, open access refers to a student who under Provincial legislation has the right to attend a Public or Catholic district school board secondary school, irrespective of their religious affiliation.

Adult Student:

Any student 18 years of age or older.

PROCEDURES

1.0 ADMISSION TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC STUDENTS

- 1.1 Subject to the provisions of the *Education Act*, all elementary school-aged students having the right of attendance shall be admitted to the geographically appropriate school under the jurisdiction of the Northeastern Catholic District School Board. The right of attendance defined in the *Education Act* (Ontario) means that all elementary school-aged children of parent(s)/guardian(s) who direct their taxes in support of a Separate School Board are eligible to attend a Catholic school. Registration is required for students who are new to the NCDSB using the online registration form available on the NCDSB webpage.
- 1.2 Students shall be enrolled in the grade to which their age corresponds. Should specialized learning situations require alternative grade placements, the Special Education department must be consulted in the admission process. For Kindergarten admission, a student shall be allowed to enroll in Junior Kindergarten in September of that calendar year during which the student becomes four years of age. A student shall be enrolled in Senior Kindergarten in September of that calendar year during which the student becomes five years of age.
- 1.3 A student shall be admitted by the Principal of an elementary school when the parent(s)/guardian(s) submit(s) the following evidence that a student has the right to attend a Roman Catholic School:
 - 1.3.1 All elementary students who have a Catholic parent/guardian and who is an elector of the NCDSB have a legal right to attend. The right of attendance shall be determined by the parent's/guardian's proof of eligibility to be an elector of the school board. A copy of the parent's/guardian's baptismal or confirmation certificate shall be considered proof of right to direct taxes to the Separate School Board (copies of all faith documentation shall be filed in student OSR). Principals shall ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) complete the *Application for Direction of School Support* (Appendix A), or the *School Lease Form* (Appendix B).
 - 1.3.2 The Principal shall complete the *Student Information Attestation Form* (Appendix C) for registration purposes upon admitting a student to a Roman Catholic School. The following documentation is required as proof (no copies of documentation shall be reproduced; documentation is for verification only):
 - i) To verify the legal name and date of birth of the student, the parent/guardian shall produce proof of age of the student through one of the following documents:
 - Birth Certificate
 - Certificate of Canadian Citizenship
 - Certificate of Registration of Birth Abroad
 - Passport
 - Permanent Resident Card
 - Record of Landing
 - ii) To verify the residential address, the parent/guardian shall produce proof of current address through one of the following documents:
 - Purchase/Rental/Lease Agreement
 - Utility Statement
 - Bank Document

- iii) If entering as Immigrant status, one of the following documents must be provided to confirm confirmation of date of entry and status in Canada:
 - Permanent Resident Card;
 - Record of Landing;
 - Confirmation of Permanent Residence;
 - Other (must specify).
- iv) An *English as a Second Language Eligibility Confirmation* (Appendix D) must be completed for **all** students who have entered Canada for the first time within the past four (4) school years, **and** who were born in a qualifying country (a country other than Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia). One of the following documents must be provided to confirm country of birth and date of first entry into Canada:
 - Foreign passport
 - Confirmation of permanent residence status
 - Permanent resident card
 - Canadian passport or Canadian citizenship card
 - Work/study permit
 - Refugee claimant or eligibility for interim federal health benefits
 - Other (must specify)
- v) Current Immunization Record indicating that all required immunizations have been received to date.
- vi) Copy of student's Catholic Baptismal Certificate. A copy is retained in the OSR for support of Sacramental Preparation.
- vii) Completed Student Registration (Online Registration Form), including at least one Emergency Contact, including operable phone number.

1.4 In all cases where a student is not eligible to generate funding from the Ministry of Education, tuition fees would apply and tuition agreements are required to be completed prior to enrolment.

1.5 To complete the admission process, the Principal will conduct a meeting with the parent/guardian. This in-person meeting will include discussion of the following topics:

- i) Special custody/guardianship arrangements for the student (use *Declaration of Guardianship* Appendix E as required, or collect copies of custody documents);
- ii) The student's FNMI status (Appendix F: *NCDSB Voluntary Self-ID Form*);
- iii) IPRC/IEP information, and special needs of the student;
- iv) Program requirements including preferred language of instruction;
- v) The NCDSB Religious Education program and required faith activity involvement;
- vi) Student medical conditions, including any prevalent medical conditions including but not limited to Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes and/or Epilepsy (Complete plans of care as required);
- vii) Previous school enrolment, including consent to contact previous Principals to obtain relevant information.

1.6 At the conclusion of this meeting, the parent/guardian will complete the *Acknowledgment of Admission Expectations for Elementary Students* (Appendix G).

- 1.7 As outlined in the Joint Protocol for Student Achievement, the Principal of an elementary school shall admit a student who is a Crown Ward or Society Ward. In these cases, the Family and Child Services Point Person should contact the school to arrange for the student's registration. Where appropriate, the Point Person can, with written consent, delegate this action to the caregiver/foster parent.
- 1.8 The Principal will communicate admission decisions to parents/guardians **within 72 hours of the admission meeting**. If mandatory documentation has not been provided as per the above provisions, decision-making timelines will be extended as required to accommodate the collection of information. For students having the right of attendance, admission will normally be granted as long as the student can be readily accommodated in the existing school structure. Specialized requirements may delay admission timelines.
- 1.9 A completed copy of the *Student Registration Form* and the *Student Information Attestation Form*, along with a copy of the provided faith documentation, shall be filed in the Ontario Student Record.

2.0 ADMISSION TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FOR NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS

- 2.1 The Principal of an elementary school is empowered to admit students of another faith who do not enjoy a statutory right to attend, subject to the provisions of this Administrative Procedure. Registration is required for students who are new to the NCDSB using the online registration form available on the NCDSB webpage. ***The submission of an on-line Student Registration does not guarantee admission to a school within our Catholic school board.***
- 2.2 The Principal will conduct an in-person interview with the parents/guardians and student, when age-appropriate, to determine that the admission request is motivated primarily by the desire for an education within a Catholic educational tradition.
- 2.3 The Principal shall provide the parent/guardian with information outlining the philosophy of Catholic schools and the expectations of the Religion and Family Life programs.
- 2.4 In considering a request for admission, the Principal shall take into account the following:
 - i) The reasons given by the parent(s)/guardian(s) for the admission request to a Catholic school;
 - ii) The level of support which the parent(s)/guardian(s) can provide to the student to foster the practice of their own faith and the support they are willing to provide in relation to Catholic values and beliefs presented at school;
 - iii) The age of the child(ren) and particular grade levels involved;
 - iv) An understanding that permission given to a student to attend under the provisions of this policy may be subject to annual review.
- 2.5 Should the Principal elect to admit students of another faith who do not have the right to attend, provisions from the procedure for ***Admissions to Elementary Schools of Roman Catholic Students*** shall be applied.
- 2.6 The Principal reserves the right to deny admission of a public school supporter under the provisions of the *Education Act*. Where a Principal is planning to deny admission or has other concerns about a particular request, the Principal shall first consult with the Family of Schools Superintendent. If

the final decision is to deny the request, the Principal will communicate the decision to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

3.0 ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR ALL STUDENTS

- 3.1 Subject to Board Policies regarding transportation and school boundaries, any secondary school-aged student within the Board's jurisdiction, may choose to attend a Catholic Secondary School in accordance with Section 42 (1) *Education Act*. All Secondary school-aged students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must accept and recognize the distinctive Catholic character and culture that pervades the Catholic Secondary School community and must be willing to support its purpose, goals and expectations. Registration is required for students who are new to the NCDSB using the online registration form available on the NCDSB webpage.
- 3.2 Students of all faiths are entitled to attend a Catholic Secondary School. The right to attend includes a commitment to reasonable school expectations for behaviour and participation in the life of the school, including the following:
- i) All registered students are required to take at least one Religious Education course in each of the four years;
 - ii) All registered students are expected to participate fully in the prayer and liturgical life of the school, including daily prayer, Masses, retreats and faith formation activities, with a minimum standard of attendance and respectful behaviour during all religious activities;
 - iii) All teachers in a Catholic Secondary School shall infuse the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations into every course that is being taught.
- 3.3 Under exceptional circumstance, an 'open access' student may apply to be exempted from taking part in the school's programs or courses of study in religious education and/or faith activities. The right to apply for an exemption does not extend to a Catholic student. Procedures for this process are detailed in section 5.0 Religious Education Exemption for Non-Catholic Secondary School Students.
- 3.4 In exceptional circumstances, students aged 16 and 17 may elect to remove themselves from the care and control of their parents. To complete the admission process independently, students will need to also complete the *Notification of Withdrawal from Parental Control* (Appendix H).
- 3.5 The Principal shall complete the *Student Information Attestation Form* (Appendix C) for registration purposes upon admitting a student to a Roman Catholic School. The following documentation is required as proof (no copies of documentation shall be reproduced; documentation is for verification only):
- i) To verify the legal name and date of birth of the student, the parent/guardian/student shall produce proof of age of the student through one of the following documents:
 - Birth Certificate
 - Certificate of Canadian Citizenship
 - Certificate of Registration of Birth Abroad
 - Passport
 - Permanent Resident Card
 - Record of Landing
 - ii) To verify the residential address, the parent/guardian/student shall produce proof of current address through one of the following documents:
 - Purchase/Rental/Lease Agreement
 - Utility Statement

- Bank Document
- iii) If entering as Immigrant status, one of the following documents must be provided to confirm confirmation of date of entry and status in Canada:
- Permanent Resident Card
 - Record of Landing
 - Confirmation of Permanent Residence
 - Other (must specify)
- iv) An *English as a Second Language Eligibility Confirmation* (Appendix D) must be completed for **all** students who have entered Canada for the first time within the past four (4) school years, and who were born in a qualifying country (a country other than Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia). One of the following documents must be provided to confirm country of birth and date of first entry into Canada:
- Foreign Passport
 - Confirmation of Permanent Residence Status
 - Permanent Resident Card
 - Canadian Passport or Canadian Citizenship Card
 - Work/Study Permit
 - Refugee Claimant or Eligibility for Interim Federal Health Benefits
 - Other (must specify)
- v) Completed Student Registration (Online Registration Form), including at least one Emergency Contact, including operable phone number.
- 3.6 In all cases where a student is not eligible to generate funding from the Ministry of Education, tuition fees would apply and tuition agreements are required to be completed prior to enrolment.
- 3.7 To complete the admission process, the Principal will conduct a meeting with the parent/guardian. This in-person meeting will include discussion of the following topics:
- i) Special custody/guardianship arrangements for the student (use Appendix E: *Declaration of Guardianship Form* as required, or collect copies of custody documents)
 - ii) The student's FNMI status (Appendix F: *Voluntary Self Identification Form*)
 - iii) IPRC/IEP information, and special needs of the student
 - iv) Program requirements including preferred language of instruction
 - v) The NCDSB Religious Education program and required faith activity involvement
 - vi) Student medical conditions, including any prevalent medical conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes and/or Epilepsy) (Complete plans of care as required)
 - vii) Previous school enrolment, including consent to contact previous Principals to obtain relevant information.
- 3.8 At the conclusion of this meeting, the parent/guardian will complete the *Acknowledgment of Admission Expectations for Secondary Students* (Appendix I).
- 3.9 For Roman Catholic families, the Principal shall request a copy of the parent's/guardian's/adult student's baptismal or confirmation certificate to be considered proof of the right to direct taxes to the Separate School Board. The Principal shall ensure that the parent/guardian/adult student completes the *Application for Direction of School Support* (Appendix A), or the *School Lease Form* (Appendix B).

- 3.10 As outlined in the Joint Protocol for Student Achievement, the Principal of a secondary school shall admit a student who is a Crown Ward or Society Ward. In these cases, the Family and Child Services Point Person should contact the school to arrange for the student's registration. Where appropriate, the Point Person can, with written consent, delegate this action to the caregiver/foster parent.
- 3.11 The Principal will communicate admission decisions to parents/guardians **within 72 hours of the admission meeting**. If mandatory documentation has not been provided as per the above provisions, decision-making timelines will be extended as required to accommodate the collection of information. Admission will normally be granted as long as the student can be readily accommodated in the existing school structure. Specialized requirements may delay admission timelines.
- 3.12 A completed copy of the *Student Registration Form* and the *Student Information Attestation Form*, along with a copy of any faith documentation provided, shall be filed in the Ontario Student Record.

4.0 ADMISSION FOR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING BETWEEN NCDSB ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- 4.1 When a change in living arrangements requires a transfer between NCDSB schools, school Principals will work collaboratively to ensure the transfer occurs expediently. The parent/guardian is responsible to contact both the current school of registration and the new school to inform the school Principals of the need for a transfer. An online registration form is not required.
- 4.2 The school secretary of the new school will contact the current NCDSB school to obtain a copy of the Student Update Form.
- 4.3 The Principal will conduct a meeting with the parent/guardian to review the information on the Student Update form and ensure accurate information about the student's address, parent contact information, emergency contact information, changes in custody, or other pertinent information relating to the transfer.
- 4.4 The Principal of the new school will complete steps 4-6 inclusive of the ***Admission to Elementary Schools for Roman Catholic Students*** procedure, which requires an in-person meeting with the parent/guardian. The Principal will then confirm the student's start date and make arrangements as needed to support the transfer. Transfer requests will typically result in admission, providing the transferring student can be accommodated within the existing structures of the new school. Specialized requirements may delay admission timelines.
- 4.5 To ensure accurate reporting, the school secretary of the current school will retire the student at the end of the last school day they have attended the school. The school secretary of the new school will reactivate the Student Information System account for the student on the first day the student is in attendance, and update the student record with all the new information provided by the parent during the meeting with the Principal.
- 4.6 A completed copy of the Student Update Form will be attached to the *Student Information Attestation Form* and kept in the Ontario Student Record.

5.0 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXEMPTION FOR NON-CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

- 5.1 No requests for exemption from Religious Education Course(s)/faith activities shall be acted upon until the application process has been completed and the exemption has been approved.
- 5.2 In order to be considered for an exemption, the student must first be registered at an NCDSB Catholic Secondary School.
- 5.3 'Open Access' students are eligible for an exemption. Students of Catholic ratepayers are not eligible for an exemption.
- 5.4 To apply for an exemption, the parent/guardian, or adult student must complete a *Religious Education Exemption Application-Secondary* (Appendix J) and submit it directly to the secondary school Principal.
- 5.5 Upon receipt of a written request, the principal shall respond to the applicant using Appendix K: *Letter of Acknowledgement from Principal*.
- 5.6 Should the parent/guardian or adult student elect to engage in a meeting about the religious education exemption request, the principal would reference the *Discernment Conversation Guidelines* (Appendix L) to support the conversation.
- 5.7 The Principal shall forward each Religious Education Exemption Application to the Family of Schools Superintendent who will review the application and determine eligibility for an exemption.
- 5.8 The Family of Schools Superintendent will communicate the outcome of each application with the Principal. The school Principal will send correspondence to the applicant detailing the results of the application (Appendix M or N).

6.0 RELATED FORMS AND APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Application for Director of School Support
- Appendix B: School Lease Form
- Appendix C: Student Information Attestation Form
- Appendix D: English as a Second Language Eligibility Confirmation
- Appendix E: Declaration of Guardianship
- Appendix F: Voluntary Self Identification
- Appendix G: Acknowledgement of Admission Expectations for Elementary Students
- Appendix H: Notification of Withdrawal from Parental Control for Students 16 to 17
- Appendix I: Acknowledgement of Admission Expectations for Secondary Students
- Appendix J: Religious Education Exemption Application-Secondary
- Appendix K: Sample Letter – Letter of Acknowledgement from Principal
- Appendix L: Discernment Conversation Guidelines
- Appendix M: Sample Letter – Religious Education Exemption Application: Qualifies for Exemption
- Appendix N: Sample Letter – Religious Education Exemption Application: Does Not Qualify for Exemption
- Appendix O: Form: Other Pupil Admission

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