

Administrative Procedure 201 RELIGIOUS DIMENSION OF EDUCATION

In order for the mission of the Division to be achieved, the religious dimension of education shall permeate all aspects of life within the Division.

The Division recognizes that formal religious instruction is essential and directs that the prescribed Religious Education Program be taught in all Division schools.

Catholic schools operate within two major contexts: faith and culture.

- The faith context arises from our relationship with the Universal Church through the local parish and family.
- This faith context informs culture through an understanding of Catholic identity, theological principles, and a shared vision.

The faith context invites Catholics to:

- Acknowledge the importance of human reason in understanding reality;
- Be open to truth and grace wherever they may be found;
- Recognize the divine at work in all creation;
- Attend to the sacred order of creation;
- Celebrate life in all its beauty;
- Understand that humanity is created in God's image, with dignity and freedom;
- Affirm and respect the dignity of all people;
- Enter into community through the Holy Spirit;
- Recognize sinfulness and the need for forgiveness and reconciliation.

At the heart of Catholic identity is the reality that Jesus Christ – the human face of God – is our model, teacher, Saviour, strength, and life.

Dimensions of Catholic identity include:

- Community – living as the People of God in the world.
- Tradition – interpreting past and present through a vision of the future in Christ.
- Humanness – respecting the God-given dignity of all people.
- Sacramentality – fostering celebration, reverence, and respect for creation.
- Rationality – seeking truth and growing in the wisdom of God.
- Spirituality – encountering God through sacraments, prayer, reflection, and moral living.
- Justice – forming individuals and communities for personal and social transformation.
- Hospitality – nurturing friendly, inclusive, and harmonious relationships.

These dimensions, while not exclusive to Catholicism, are woven uniquely throughout the Catholic experience that informs identity.

Procedures

1. Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff members shall strive to permeate the dimensions of Catholic identity in their work, relationships, and professional practice.

2. Responsibilities of Principals

Principals shall ensure that the dimensions of Catholic identity are actively lived and visibly integrated. The following activities are required:

- 2.1. Regular blessings of daily work and meals.
- 2.2. Prayer and liturgical celebrations at appropriate times throughout the school year.
- 2.3. A School Opening Mass for all staff annually.
- 2.4. An annual Faith Development Day.
- 2.5. Permeation-focused professional learning sessions.
- 2.6. Participation in Catholic Education Sunday.

3. Teacher Placement

Administrators shall ensure that teaching assignments in Religious Education are given to teachers with appropriate backgrounds and preparation in Religious Education. Teachers of Religious Education must be practicing Catholics. In exceptional circumstances, a non-Catholic teacher may be assigned to teach Religious Education only with the Superintendent's prior approval.

4. Permeation in Curriculum

- 4.1. Teachers shall intentionally integrate Catholic teaching into curriculum content and instructional methods across all subject areas.
- 4.2. Instruction shall reflect Gospel values, the teachings of the Catholic Church, and a holistic understanding of the human person.

5. Religious Education Program

The Superintendent shall maintain a Religious Education Program approved by the Bishops of Alberta.

- 5.1. The program shall encourage service to the community and engagement in social justice activities.
- 5.2. The program shall acknowledge and affirm the diversity of churches and faith traditions.

6. Delivery of Religious Education

The Principal shall ensure that Religious Education courses are taught, as prescribed, at all grade levels.

The Principal shall advise all parents that students are expected to participate in religious studies and in the religious life of the school.

- 6.1. Religious Education programs used in the school must be approved by diocesan authorities. Religious teachers must follow the program approved by the Bishops of Alberta.

- 6.2. All elementary and junior high students shall take Religious Education each year, in addition to performing acts of charity, participating in social justice activities, and attending religious celebrations.
- 6.3. All high school students shall complete a minimum of 9 credits in Religious Education (Religious Education 15, 25, 35)
 - 6.3.1. Students registering partway through high school will meet the above requirements for Religious Education, at the Principal's discretion.

7. Participation in Religious Life

All students are expected to participate in the religious life of the school at least to the level of being respectfully attentive.

8. Responsibilities of the Religious Education Consultant

Under the guidance of the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent of Faith and Educational Services shall provide:

- 8.1. Leadership in faith development and theological education for staff.
- 8.2. Consultation for the Religious Education Program.
- 8.3. Consultation for the permeation of Catholic identity.

9. Partnership with Parish Community

School staff shall cooperate with the parish to enhance students' Religious Education and strengthen the school's faith life.

Reviewed/Revised: March 2014 November 2025

Reference: Education Act, Sections 16, 51, 52, 53, 54, 58, 197, 222
The Directory of Catechesis
The Catholic School on Threshold of the Third Millennium
The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School
The Catholic School
Documents from the Congregation for Catholic Education
Standards for Preparing Children and Youth for the Sacraments
Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ
Go and Make Disciples: Living the Great Commission
Five Marks of Catholic Education
Learner Competencies Through Catholic Education
Eight Characters of Catholic Education