



REPORT TO

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS 2017 - 2018

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
Philippians 4:7*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
October 18, 2018	November 1, 2018	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>
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<b>INFORMATION REPORT</b>		

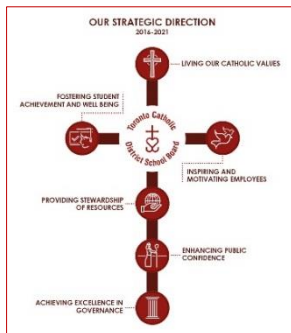
**Vision:**

*At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.*

**Mission:**

*The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.*

*We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.*



- Rory McGuckin  
Director of Education
  
- D. Koenig  
Associate Director  
of Academic Affairs
  
- T. Robins  
Acting Associate Director  
of Planning and Facilities
  
- L. Noronha  
Executive Superintendent  
of Business Services and  
Chief Financial Officer

## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report outlines the number and type of requests for Religious Accommodation within Toronto Catholic District School Board schools in the school year from September 2017 to June 2018. Data for this report is collected through the use of a survey and interviews with school principals. Since 2012, there have been relatively few formal requests for religious accommodation, including exemptions, and this pattern continues for this school year.

*The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 20 hours*

## **B. PURPOSE**

1. This report fulfils the obligation articulated in the TCDSB Religious Accommodation Policy S.22 that ‘the consistent application of religious accommodation requests will be monitored and reported in an annual report to the board of trustees’. (**Appendix A**)
2. The obligation for honouring requests for religious accommodation is also articulated in the TCDSB Opening and Closing Exercises Policy S.S.02. (**Appendix B**)

## **C. BACKGROUND**

1. **September 2018** – All principals provided input regarding religious accommodation requests for the previous school year.
2. Recently, arising from an Ontario Human Rights Tribunal case, the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board published its Practice and Procedure around Religious Education Exemptions. The TCDSB received this document on October 16, 2017 and, as recommended by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association, the TCDSB reviewed the document and confirms that its own policies and procedures meet all statutory requirements.

## **D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS**

1. Despite its population of approximately 91,000 students, the board has consistently had very few requests for religious accommodation in the past. There were 12 schools that reported requests for religious accommodation in the 2017-18 school year.
2. A summary of all requests is provided in **Appendix C**. Accommodations have been made in accordance with the *TCDSB Religious Accommodation Policy S.22* and within the provisions of the Education Act, Section 42(11) and 42(13) (**Appendix D**).
3. When requests for religious accommodation are made, principals engage in discussions with students and parents/guardians. In addition, principals consult with their area superintendent as well as the Superintendent of Student Success.

## **E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Principals will dialogue with their area superintendents and, when necessary, consult with the Superintendent of Student Success regarding requests for religious accommodation arise.
2. In June, principals will be asked to provide data on religious accommodation requests received in the current school year.
3. Senior Staff will report to board annually in the early part of the next school year, regarding the June data collected regarding religious accommodation requests.

## **F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.