



REPORT TO

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

**REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS  
2019-2020**

*All these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the Lord your God  
Deuteronomy 28:2*

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July 2, 2020	October 1, 2020	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

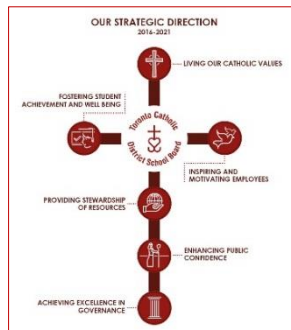
**Vision:**

*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.*



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Chief Financial Officer

## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides the number and type of requests for Religious Accommodations within the Toronto Catholic District School Board schools from September 2019 to June 2020. Data for this report were 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. In fact, requests have gone down this year.

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

## **B. PURPOSE**

1. This report fulfils the obligation in the TCDSB Religious Accommodation Policy S.22 that religious accommodation requests will be monitored and reported in an annual report to the Board of Trustees.
2. The obligation for honouring requests for religious accommodation is also articulated in the TCDSB Opening and Closing Exercises Policy S.S.02 (<https://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Documents/SS02.pdf>).

## **C. BACKGROUND**

1. 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. As recommended by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, the TCDSB reviewed the document and confirmed that its own policies and procedures meet all statutory requirements.

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

1. Although the number of requests for religious accommodation increased in past years, this year shows a reduction from 19 schools in 2018-19 to 16 schools in 2019-20 reporting requests for religious accommodation. The number of requests has also dropped from 55 in 2018-2019 to 43 requests in 2019-2020, with the greatest number being requests for accommodations in the area of participation in daily activities and curriculum.
2. A summary of all requests is provided in the *Appendix*. 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)(<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02#BK50>).
3. When requests for religious accommodation are received, 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.
2. In June 2021, principals will be asked to provide data on religious accommodation requests received in the 2020-2021 school year.
3. Senior Staff report to Board annually in the fall of each school year, regarding the data on religious accommodation requests collected in June of the previous school year.

## **F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.