



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL
BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEEREQUESTS FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS
2022-2023

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

Drafted

September 18, 2023

Meeting Date

October 5, 2023

Michael Caccamo - Superintendent of Nurturing our Catholic Community, Safe Schools,
Continuing Education, Policy Review and Development, and Religious Accommodations

INFORMATION REPORT

Vision: *IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in
Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.*

Mission: *Nurturing the faith development and academic
excellence of our Catholic learning community through the
love of God, neighbour, and self.*



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2025

IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope



Brendan Browne
Director of Education

Adrian Della Mora
Associate Director of Academic
Affairs & Chief Operating Officer

Derek Boyce
Associate Director of Corporate
Services and Chief Commercial Officer

Ryan Putnam
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the number and type of requests for religious accommodation within the Toronto Catholic District School Board schools from September 2022 to June 2023. Data for this report were collected using a survey and interviews with school Principals. Since 2012, there have been relatively few formal requests for religious accommodation, including exemptions.

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. There were 14 schools that reported student requests for religious accommodation in 2022-2023. The total number of requests reported were 74, with the greatest number of religious accommodations requested for "religious dress".
2. A summary of all requests is provided in *Appendix A*. 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 responsible for religious accommodation requests oversight.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Principals will dialogue with their Area Superintendents and, when necessary, consult with the Superintendent responsible for religious accommodation requests oversight.
2. In June 2024, Principals will be asked to provide data on religious accommodation requests received in the 2023-2024 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 information of the Board of Trustees.