
HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 67

Policy Code: HGAE
Policy Title: Religion & Human Sexuality
Cross Reference: HNB, HGAC, HGAD
Legal Reference: School Act 50 & 50.1,
Adoption Date: February 26, 1997
Amendment or Re-affirmation Date: December 18, 2004
February 25, 2014

POLICY HANDBOOK**POLICY**

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION UNDERSTANDS THE SCHOOL ACT ESTABLISHES REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS AND EXEMPTION OF STUDENTS FROM CLASS OR THE PLACE OF INSTRUCTION IN CERTAIN INSTANCES WHERE COURSES OF STUDY, EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, OR INSTRUCTION OR EXERCISES INCLUDE SUBJECT MATTER THAT DEALS PRIMARILY AND EXPLICITLY WITH RELIGION, HUMAN SEXUALITY OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION.

THE BOARD ACCEPTS A COOPERATIVE ROLE WITH THE HOME AND SHALL EXEMPT STUDENTS WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY WHEN PARENTS MAKE A WRITTEN REQUEST.

REGULATIONS

1. Human sexuality education shall be that prescribed by Alberta Education through the grades 4 to 9 Health and Life Skills, and Career and Life Management programs of study and the teacher shall use professional judgment with selection of the instructional materials.
2. Schools may access a health professional to assist with the delivery of the curriculum outcomes under the supervision of a teacher.
3. The Board will adhere to Section 50 and 50.1 of the School Act which requires boards to provide parents with notice (see Appendix A) indicating that a particular outcome or component of a course contains subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation prior to commencement of instruction.
 - a. The principal shall decide if parent information is best distributed through the provision of written information sent home or a parent meeting.
 - b. Such notice must allow the parent enough time to request that their child be included or exempt from taking part via an exemption form provided by the school (see Appendix B).
4. Parent notification does not apply to incidental or indirect references to religion, religious themes, human sexuality or sexual orientation in a course of study, educational program, instruction or exercises or in the use of instructional materials.

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5. Courses requiring notification include:
 - a. Career and Life Management,
 - b. Reproduction and Readiness for Parenting, HCS3050:
 - c. Developing Maturity & Independence, HSS1040
 - d. Health and Life Skills (Grades 4 through 9)
 - e. Religious Courses and
 - f. Some Locally developed courses if they contain include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation.
6. Where a parent makes a written request, teachers shall exempt the student, without academic penalty, from such instruction, course of study, educational program or use of instructional material.
7. The matter of process regarding the commencement and cessation of Board directed recitation of the Lord's prayer as part of the opening day will be dealt with in policy HNA.

NOTICE FORM UNDER SECTION 50.1 OF THE SCHOOL ACT

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child is currently enrolled in a course or program of studies that [circle one]:

- a) includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with _____
[specify religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation]; OR
- b) uses an instructional material or exercise that includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with _____ [specify religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation].

The subject matter is contained in the following areas:

[identify the theme/outcome of the course or program of studies, the exercise or the instructional material that contains the subject matter].

The purpose for the inclusion of this subject matter in the course or program of studies is:

[identify the learning outcome associated with the identified subject matter].

Instruction involving the subject matter will be provided on _____ [specify date and time].

Pursuant to section 50.1(2) of the School Act, you as a parent/guardian may request that your child be excluded from the above-identified instruction, without academic penalty, by having your child either:

- a) leave the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place or where the instructional material is being used for the duration of that part of the instruction; or
- b) remain in the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place without taking part in the instruction or use of instructional material.

In order to exercise this option, you must sign and return the attached exemption form to _____ [specify individual] on or before the date of the instruction indicated above. If this form is not returned before that date, your child will be included in the instruction above.

If you would like additional information about the content of this notification, please contact

_____ [specify individual]

_____ [identify Principal]

STUDENT EXEMPTION UNDER SECTION 50.1 OF THE SCHOOL ACT

TO: Principal/Teacher of _____ [identify school].

In response to the notice provided to me by the Horizon School Division dated _____ [date of notice] indicating that a course or program of studies in which my child is enrolled, or an instructional material or exercise used in a course or program of studies in which my child is enrolled, includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with _____ [specify religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation], I, _____ [name of parent/legal guardian], in accordance with section 50.1(2) of the School Act, hereby request that my child, _____ [name of child], be excluded from the instruction, exercise or the use of instructional material identified in the notice.

I request that my child: (check relevant box)

A) Leave the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place or where the instructional material is being used for the duration of that part of the instruction.

OR

B) Remain in the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place without taking part in the instruction or use of instructional material.

I confirm that I am the legal guardian of _____ [name of child] and have chosen to exercise my option to have my child excluded from the instruction described in the notice from _____ School [name of school] on the dates indicated in the notice. I also confirm that it is my obligation to ensure that this form is returned to the school principal/teacher on or before the date of the instruction indicated in the notice.

The child to whom this exemption notice applies is: _____ [name of child]
Grade: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian

Date