



Policy Manual – Human Resources

H.T.21 Staff Requirements in Religious Education/Formation/Renewal (Teaching & Administration) PROCEDURES

New Staff - Formation

1. Newly hired teachers to the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board includes:
 - a. Experienced Teachers, who shall be required to complete the Board's Faith Formation Program prior to being granted a permanent contract with the Board; and,
 - b. Newly hired beginning teachers, who shall be required to complete the Board's Faith Formation Program within the two years of their probationary period.
2. Newly hired teachers shall also be required to provide evidence of their successful completion of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association/Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association [OECTA/OCSTA] religious education program Part I or equivalent, within the first four years of their employment with the School Board.

Permanent Staff - Renewal

1. Members of teaching staff shall, during a five (5) year period, complete a course or approved program of a minimum 30 hours designed to enhance their effectiveness as teachers in a Catholic school, to enhance their spirituality, and inform them on current theological issues.
2. Each September, teaching staff members shall be required to indicate to the school principal the date of their last approved program/course in religious education.
3. When a religious renewal program is completed, the appropriate religious renewal form shall be submitted to the Superintendent of **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**.

Requirements for Positions of Responsibility

Candidates for positions of responsibility shall be required to produce evidence that they have fulfilled the Board's requirement for faith formation/spiritual renewal, within the individual's five-year renewal cycle.

Requirements for Promotion to Vice-Principal or Principal

Candidates for promotion to the vice-principal and principal roster shall, in addition to their fulfilment of their five-year renewal commitment, be required to produce evidence that they have successfully completed the OECTA/OCSTA Religious Education Specialist Certificate or equivalent/higher credentials in Catholic religious/theological studies from an accredited University.

Examples of such credentials in Catholic Religious/Theological studies are:

- Master in Religious or Theological Studies;
- Bachelor in Religious or Theological Studies;
- Diploma in Religious or Theological Studies;
- Certificate in Religious or Theological Studies; and,
- Certificate in Catholic Leadership.

Vice-Principals and Principals shall be required to fulfil the Board's requirement for faith formation/spiritual renewal within their five-year renewal cycle. The date of completion of their religious renewal shall be recorded on the Principal/Vice-Principal Performance Appraisal.

Senior Administration

The Director of Education, Superintendents of Education and Assistant Superintendents of Education shall be required to fulfil the Board's requirement for faith formation/spiritual renewal within their three-year renewal cycle. The date of completion of their religious renewal shall be recorded on their Performance Appraisal.

Senior Administrators shall present to the Director of Education, no later than September 30th of each year, a report of the progress made towards completing the requirements of the three year religious renewal policy.

1. New Staff-Formation

Upon completion of the Board's Faith Formation Program within the probationary period, candidates shall submit evidence of completion to the Superintendent responsible for **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**.

Upon completion of the OECTA/OCSTA religious education part I or equivalent, within the first four years of their employment candidates shall submit evidence of completion to the Superintendent of **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**.

2. Permanent Staff/School Administration - Renewal

Upon completion of a course or approved program of a minimum of 30 hours, candidates in the program shall submit the "Completion of Religious Renewal Form" to the Superintendent of **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**.

3. Requirements for Promotion to Vice-Principalship or Principalship

Upon completion of the OECTA/OCSTA Religious Education Specialist Certificate or equivalent/higher credentials in Catholic Religious/theological studies from an accredited University, candidates for promotion shall submit evidence of completion to the **Superintendent of Human Resources**.

4. Senior Administration

Upon completion of their three-year religious renewal requirements, Superintendents of Education shall submit evidence of completion to the Director of Education.

Approaches for Renewal

In fulfilling the requirements of this policy, the following approaches may be utilized:

Approach #1 - Approved Courses/Faith Formation Programs

The Board's faith formation requirement can be met through any one of the following:

- a. successful completion of an approved academic Catholic theology course;
- b. successful completion of an approved university credit course in Catholic theology;
- c. participation in an approved faith formation course; and,
- d. participation in a minimum of two (2) approved weekend retreats.

Upon completion of a religious renewal program, teachers/ school administrators shall complete and forward the "Completion of Religious Renewal Form" to the Superintendent responsible for **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**.

Approach #2 - Other Religious Courses/Faith Formation Programs

This approach allows teachers/administrators to choose their own course or program that meets the Board's faith formation requirement. The selection of courses allowed in this Approach would require the approval of the Superintendent of Education – **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**.

Approach #3 - Individual and/or Group Initiated Programs

This approach allows staff members to design their own plan for religious renewal. This can be done either on an individual basis or jointly with others. Such programs may involve a series of twilight retreats, each of a minimum of three hours duration. Two twilight retreats per year for 5 years will satisfy the requirement.

Alternatively, the programs may include combining a variety of activities such as weekend site based workshops/retreats; seminars; discussion/prayer groups etc., which together accumulate a minimum of 30 hours duration.

A list of suggested themes or topics for faith formation experiences is found in Appendix A.

The list of staff members who participate in a school's twilight retreat or other faith formation/renewal programs shall be kept at the school office.

All programs, courses, retreats or other options submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for religious renewal shall take place after or before school/office hours.

The selection of programs offered in this category would require the approval of the Superintendent of Education – **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation**. Prior to embarking on their designed course or program, applicants using this option shall complete and submit the prescribed A Request for Approval Form to the aforementioned Superintendent of Education.

- N.B. As indicated in the Requirements for Promotion section on page 2 of this policy, teachers applying for a position of responsibility are required *to have completed* the Board's requirement for faith/religious renewal.

End Note

The criteria for approval of any course or program shall be based on the reasons for religious renewal that are given on page 2 of this document. Accordingly, the Superintendent of Education—**Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation** will approve courses/programs that achieve the following objectives:

- a. to increase the effectiveness of teachers in a Catholic school;
- b. to enhance spiritual, moral and religious growth of teachers;
- c. to enable teachers become more knowledgeable of their Catholic heritage; and
- d. to provide them with new insights and discoveries in theology and in spirituality.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION/FORMATION/RENEWAL

1. Themes for faith formation experiences
 - a) The following themes are taken from Catholic Education; The Future is Now by Fr. Jim Mulligan and have proven useful to school communities:
 - Prayer: Where Have I Found God?;
 - The Catholic School of the Future: The Centrality of Community;
 - Catholic Education and the Common Good;
 - Evangelization and the Media: The Challenge;
 - The Vocation of the Catholic Educator;
 - A Reflection of Evangelizing the Unchurched;
 - The Secularization of Our Culture: How We Encounter It! How Catholic Educators Meet its Challenge;
 - Technology and Ethics in Catholic Education; and,
 - Coaching and Catholic Education
 - b) Other Themes:
 - God's Call and Our Response Within the History and Mission of Our School;
 - Meeting God in the Hebrew Scripture;
 - God's Continued Revelation in the Christian Scriptures
 - Prayer-friendship with God;
 - Support for Our Faith Journeys;
 - Jesus the Teacher and Our Vocation to the Ministry of Teaching;
 - The Church;
 - Moral Choices and Guideposts;
 - Social Justice: What Scripture, Church Documents, and Current Experience teach about it;
 - Models of Justice;
 - Call to Justice;
 - Continuing Our Faith Journey;
 - Investigating the Six Strands of Catechesis;
 - The new Evangelization/**Evangelii Gaudium**;
 - Catholic Social Teaching;
 - Scripture;
 - Study of The Mass; and,
 - **Stewardship of Creation/Laudato Si**
 - c) The Board's Document Learning with Faith can be the focus of a number of faith formation experiences. The use of this document enables the school community to turn the faith formation experiences into an on-going process that seeks to enhance the Christ centredness of its school, thereby ensuring its Catholicity.

- d) A mini retreat can be based on a Church document, both from the Universal and from the Canadian Church, dealing with education; such as, The Catholic School, This Moment of Promise etc. Also, Papal Encyclicals and Apostolic Letters dealing with current and relevant topics can be used as themes of a mini-retreat; e.g. The Gospel of Life; The Day of the Lord; Stay with us Lord; Evangelii Gaudium.
- e) School communities can always choose their own themes for the retreat. A particular theme could be chosen to address an issue, an event or a situation that engages a school community at a particular time.

2. Suggested format for faith formation experiences:

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Location: the school; a retreat centre/parish hall

Session components:

- a) communal/shared prayers [introduction & conclusion]
- b) facilitator's input related to selected theme; scripture reading and reflection
- c) group discussion: common sharing of faith as it relates to the selected theme
- d) a shared meal.