

<b>Procedure Title</b>	<b>Exemption from Instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health (Grades 1-8)</b>		
<b>Date of Issue</b>	October 9, 2019	<b>Related Policy</b>	BP 7520-D
<b>Revision Dates</b>		<b>Related Forms</b>	AF 7522
<b>Review Date</b>		<b>Originator</b>	Administrative Council
<b>References</b>			
Education Act; Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162 "Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in 'The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019'"			

## **1.0 RATIONALE**

- 1.1 Parents/guardians play an important role in their child(ren)'s learning; they are the primary educators for their children with respect to learning about values, appropriate behaviour, and ethno-cultural, spiritual, and personal beliefs and traditions, and are their children's first role models. It is therefore important for schools and parents/guardians to work together to ensure that home and school provide a mutually supportive framework for young people's education (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162, page 2).
- 1.2 Bluewater District School Board is dedicated to the inclusion of all students, but acknowledges the right of parent(s)/guardian(s), through the implementation of Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162 (PPM 162), to request that their child(ren) be exempted from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of 'The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019'.

## **2.0 SYSTEM EXPECTATIONS**

- 2.1 In accordance with PPM 162, parents/guardians may choose, annually, to exempt their child(ren) from instruction on an individual basis, according to the following conditions:
  - i. Exemptions are limited to instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of 'The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019'. Students will not be exempted from instruction related to any other expectations in this curriculum or related to expectations in other curriculum subjects.
  - ii. Exemptions will be granted only for instruction related to all the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student's grade, and not for instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectations.
  - iii. References to human development and sexual health made by teachers, board staff, or students outside the intentional teaching of content related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations are not included in the exemption policy/procedure.
    - a. There will be no academic penalty for an exemption.
    - b. There will be no assessment, evaluation, or reporting of exempted students' achievement of Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in their particular grade.

- iv. Exempted students' grades in health and physical education will be determined based on the overall expectations in strand D of the curriculum, without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health.
- 2.2 Annually, in order to satisfy the requirements of PPM 162 and this procedure, the principal will determine how the period of instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations (found in strand D of 'The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019') will be implemented in their school.
- 2.3 Parents/Guardians will:
  - a. familiarize themselves with the curriculum materials provided to them by the school; parents/guardians are invited to contact their child(ren)'s teacher and/or principal with questions/concerns regarding this information; and
  - b. ensure that they submit a completed exemption form, AF 7522 "Exemption from Instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health (Grades 1-8)" by the stated deadline, if they wish to exempt their child from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of 'The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019'.

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

#### 3.1 Period of Instruction

Refers to the period, including the beginning and end dates, during which instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health during health and physical education classes is delivered. This period could extend over several days or weeks, depending on individual schools' calendars and teachers' lesson plans.

#### 3.2 Unforeseen event

Refers to an event that impairs the school's ability to administer the 'period of instruction'.

### 4.0 PROCEDURE

#### 4.1 Notice and Communications

Principals will:

- i. provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade (annually);
  - a. Grade-specific curriculum expectations are available in the Administrators' Handbook on SharePoint.
- ii. notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that they can choose to have their child(ren) exempted from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations;
  - a. Sample language to use for notification purposes is available in the Administrators' Handbook on SharePoint.
- iii. upon request, make form AF 7522 available to parent(s)/guardian(s) each year and inform them that separate written requests will not be accepted. Attached to this form will be the daily schedule for instruction for the child.
- iv. notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the school deadline for which completed AF 7522 must be submitted in order for their child(ren) to be exempted (must not be more than five school days before the start of the period of instruction);
- v. notify all parent(s)/guardian(s), at least 20 school days before the start of the period of instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations; and
- vi. inform parent(s)/guardian(s) that, in the case of an unforeseen event, the board and/or the school have the authority to move the period of instruction to a later date in the school year. Notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given as soon as reasonably possible;

Methods of notification include, but are not limited to, notice home with students, school newsletters, and/or SchoolMessenger. Principals must determine the most effective way(s) to communicate this information to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their school community.

#### **4.2 Process**

Principals will:

- i. allow students to be exempt from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations, without academic penalty, when a request for an exemption has been submitted using form AF 7522, prior to the deadline;
- ii. develop a school-based process to acknowledge the receipt of exemption forms (AF 7522) from parent(s)/guardian(s). Schools have the autonomy to develop acknowledgement and tracking processes that best suit the needs of their school and school community; and
- iii. make the final decision regarding whether to accept or reject a request for an exemption that does not fall within the parameters of this procedure (e.g., the exemption form, AF 7522, was not returned by the deadline).

#### **4.3 Supervision of Exempted Students**

- i. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who elect to have their child exempted in accordance with this procedure must choose one of the following options for their child's supervision (see AF 7522):
  - a) to remain in the classroom during the exemption period without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health, and to be assigned work or activities by the teacher that are *unrelated* to Human Development and Sexual Health; or
  - b) to leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal. The supervision of the student will be determined by the principal; or
  - c) to be released into the care of the parent or the parent's approved designate.
- ii. Principals will coordinate with applicable teachers/staff to ensure that appropriate supervision and/or alternate work/activities are made available for each exempted student during the period of instruction.