

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 325**

### **Exemption From Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction, Grades 1 to 8**

#### **RATIONALE**

The Limestone District School Board (LDSB) is committed to delivering health and physical education to all elementary students, using the *Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*. LDSB is committed to building positive school cultures that support student achievement and wellness.

The Exemption from Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction, Grades 1 to 8 Procedure (the “Procedure”) was developed in response to the Ontario Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 162 which requires school boards to develop a procedure that allows for students to be exempted, at the request of their parents/guardians, 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* (the “Curriculum”).

#### **DEFINITIONS**

*Board* refers to The Limestone District School Board, or LDSB.

*Curriculum* refers to the *Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*, specifically Strand D.

*Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM)*, for the purpose of Procedure 325, refers to Ontario Ministry of Education’s 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 to 8, 2019, which is the governing legislation for this Procedure.

*Strand D*, also known as the Healthy Living strand, helps students to develop an understanding of the factors that contribute to healthy development, a sense of personal responsibility for lifelong health and a respect for their own health in relation to others and the world around them. This Procedure focuses only on the human development and sexual health aspects of this strand.

#### **APPLICATION AND SCOPE**

This Procedure applies to all LDSB staff, Grade 1 to 8 students, and their parents/guardians.

In accordance with the directions outlined in PPM 162, exemptions will be granted only for instruction related to all the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in Healthy Living Strand D, and not for instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectations found in Healthy Living Strand D.

**Important Note:** References to, or conversations about sexual health-related concepts among teachers, school staff or other students outside formal instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health are not subject to this exemption. For example: this may include, but is not limited to, an unplanned discussion that is prompted by a student's question about a topic related to gender identity in popular media.

## **1.0.0 PROCEDURES**

### **1.1.0 NOTICE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **Role of the Principal**

- 1.1.1 At the beginning of every school year, parents/guardians will be informed that they can choose to have their child or children exempted from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by completing and returning an exemption form for each child (Form 325-B).
- 1.1.2 At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will be provided with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade for Grades 1 to 8 from the Ministry Health and Physical Education curriculum (Related Form 325-D). This information will be available on the LDSB website.
- 1.1.3 Prior to instruction, the educator will inform parents/guardians that the expectations related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in Strand D will be covered.
- 1.1.4 The deadline for the exemption request will be five school days before the start of instruction.

#### **Role of the Parent/Guardian**

- 1.1.5 Each year, for every child, parents/guardians will notify the school of their request for exemption using LDSB's paper copy exemption form (Related Form 325-B). This exemption request will be due five school days before the beginning of Human Development and Sexual Health instruction in Strand D.
- 1.1.6 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*. If an exemption request is made, it will be for *all* of the expectations related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations for that grade, and not for *some/selected* expectations of the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations for that grade.
- 1.1.7 If a parent/guardian submits their intention to request exemption through a separate written request, the school principal will refer the parent/guardian to the LDSB paper

copy exemption form. Requests for exemptions made by phone or exemption forms without a parent/guardian signature will not be accepted.

## **1.2.0 PROCESS**

- 1.2.1 There will be no academic penalty for exempted students. Exempted students' grade in health and physical education will be based on the basis of the overall expectations in Strand D of the curriculum, without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health. There will be no assessment, evaluation or reporting of exempted students' achievement of Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in their particular grade. Therefore, there will be no academic penalty for exemption.
- 1.2.2 The school principal will make the final decision about whether to accept or reject a request for an exemption under the following conditions:
- (i) Form was not returned prior to the notice period of five school days before the start of the period of instruction
  - (ii) Incomplete form was submitted
- 1.2.3 The principal will acknowledge the receipt of exemption when a completed form is received from parents/guardians. The school principal will do so using the paper copy form (Related Form 325-C). The form will be signed and dated by the school principal in acknowledgement and returned to the parent/guardian.

## **1.3.0 SUPERVISION OF EXEMPTED STUDENTS**

- 1.3.1 The principal will provide options for supervision and parents/guardians will be provided with the choice of how their exempted child/children will be supervised during the exemption period.
- 1.3.2 Parents/guardians will be required to choose one of the three options, as outlined in the Exemption Form, which will be accommodated by the LDSB as much as reasonably possible:
- a) Option 1: The student will be released into the care of the parent/guardian or approved designate for the duration of the exemption period
  - b) Option 2: The student will remain in the classroom during the exemption without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health and will be assigned work or activities to be determined by the teacher which are unrelated to Human Development and Sexual Health
  - c) Option 3: The student will leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and will remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal. Supervision of the student will be provided by the LDSB, but the assigned work or activities will be determined by the school principal or teacher and at no cost to the local school.

## **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

Policy/Program Memorandum:

- Ontario Ministry of Education's 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.