



Niagara Catholic District School Board  
**OPENING OR CLOSING EXERCISES**

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

300 – Schools/Students

No 302.6.1

Adopted Date: June 26, 2001

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: November 26, 2019

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the following are Administrative Operational Procedures for Opening or Closing Exercises.

## PREAMBLE

Opening or closing exercises reflect the distinctiveness of Catholic education, Catholic beliefs and traditions, and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations in all Niagara Catholic schools.

Daily opening and/or closing exercises in the Niagara Catholic District School Board will include a prayer that reflects Gospel values and the Catholic faith. A specific scriptural reading or reflection may also be included to enhance the message for the day.

To instill pride and respect for self and country, all schools in the Niagara Catholic District School Board must include the singing/playing of O Canada as part of daily opening exercises. Principals will ensure that the singing/playing of the national anthem will include the two official languages of Canada.

## OPENING OR CLOSING EXERCISES

Daily opening or closing exercises must include:

1. the singing/playing of the national anthem, O Canada with the two official languages of Canada; and
2. a prayer. A specific scriptural reading or reflection may also be included to enhance the message for the day.

## PLEDGE OF CITIZENSHIP

The Principal, after consultation with staff and the Catholic School Council, may decide to include the reciting of the pledge of citizenship in opening or closing exercises. This practice shall be reviewed on an annual basis at the beginning of each school year.

Pledge of Citizenship:

- I affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, and to her heirs and successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.

## EXEMPTIONS

A student is not required to sing O Canada or recite the pledge of citizenship in the following circumstances:

- In the case of a pupil who is less than 18 years old, if the pupil's parent/guardian applies in writing to the Principal of the school for an exemption from the exercises.
- In the case of a pupil who is at least 18 years old, if the pupil applies in writing to the Principal for an exemption from the exercises.

### *References*

- [Education Act s.304](#)
- [O. Regulation 435/00, s.1](#)
- *Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures*
  - [Safe and Accepting Schools Policy \(302.6\)](#)
  - [Equity and Inclusive Education Policy \(100.10\)](#)
  - [Religious Accommodation Policy \(100.10.1\)](#)

<b>Adopted Date:</b>	<b>June 26, 2001</b>
<b>Revision History:</b>	<b>May 28, 2002</b> <b>November 26, 2013</b> <b>November 26, 2019</b>