

# YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



BOARD POLICY	
<i>Policy Section</i> <b>Governance</b>	<i>Policy Number</i> <b>102</b>
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**POLICY TITLE: RESPECTING SACRED TIME:  
ASH WEDNESDAY, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER MONDAY**

## 1. PURPOSE

In anticipation of the joy of Easter, Catholic Education proclaims a view of community that is Church centred and gives thanks for God's goodness as revealed through Christ's Life, Death, and Resurrection (The Paschal Mystery). Hence, the York Catholic District School Board honours the religious significance of Ash Wednesday, the days and evenings of Holy Week and Easter Monday.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

The York Catholic District School Board is committed to developing school communities formed by Catholic beliefs and traditions that enable all members of our learning community to engage in their personal faith journey. In keeping with this commitment, NO meetings or school events of any kind shall occur during the evenings of Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and Easter Monday. The Board will ensure that Winter Break does not coincide with the days of Holy Week.

## 3. PARAMETERS

- 3.1 There shall be no meetings on Board premises, including Catholic School Council meetings, scheduled events or tournaments during the evenings, that being at 6:00 pm or later, on Ash Wednesday and Holy Week so that Parent(s)/Guardian(s), students, school personnel and other community members are free to attend religious celebrations and obligations.
- 3.2 In determining the annual school year calendar, the Board shall maintain Monday to Thursday of Holy Week as instructional days, so that Holy Week and the Winter Break shall not be merged.

- 3.3 There shall be no overnight excursions or trips during Holy Week unless explicit approval has been received from the Director of Education. (For example, a religious trip or pilgrimage that starts or ends during Holy Week may be granted an exemption.)

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

##### 4.1 Board of Trustees

- 4.1.1 To determine and approve the annual school calendar to ensure that Holy Week and Winter Break shall not be merged.

##### 4.2 Director of Education

- 4.2.1 To oversee compliance of the Respecting Sacred Time: Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and Easter Monday policy.
- 4.2.2 To ensure that annually, the entire York Catholic Learning Community is made aware of this policy.

##### 4.3 Senior Administration/Principals

- 4.3.1 To ensure that school communities/departments are aware of the policy and respect the policy by avoiding evening activities on the designated days of Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and Easter Monday.

#### 5. DEFINITIONS

##### 5.1 Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday occurs forty (40) days prior to Easter and marks the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent, a period of fasting and abstinence. Ash Wednesday can fall as early as February 4 and as late as March 10.

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of adherents as a celebration and [reminder of human mortality](#), and as a sign of mourning and [repentance](#) to [God](#). The ashes used are typically gathered from the burning of the palms from the previous year's [Palm Sunday](#).

##### 5.2 Easter Monday

Easter Monday is reserved for a day of celebration and reflection post the solemn observance and celebration of the Triduum (the three-days of observance from the evening of Maundy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday).

##### 5.3 Holy Week

Holy Week is the week preceding [Easter](#) and the final week of [Lent](#). It begins with [Palm Sunday](#) and ends with [Holy Saturday](#), the day before Easter Sunday. Holy Week includes [Holy Thursday](#) (also known as [Maundy Thursday](#)) and [Good Friday](#), which, together with Holy Saturday, are known as the [Triduum](#).

Holy Week marks the Church's annual celebration of the events of Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

#### 5.4 Senior Administration

For the purpose of this policy Senior Administration will include all school and centrally assigned Administrators or Designates, Superintendents of Education, Senior Managers or any other Supervisor who have direct supervisory responsibilities for a group of employees.

#### 6. CROSS REFERENCES

YCDSB Policy 606 [Catholic School Councils](#)

*The Catholic Liturgical Calendar*, Liturgical Press: Resources for a Worshipping World

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