



YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

BOARD POLICY	
<i>Policy Section</i> Program/Curriculum	<i>Policy Number</i> 314
<i>Former Policy #</i>	<i>Page</i> 1 of 4
<i>Original Approved Date</i> June 4, 2013	<i>Subsequent Approval Dates</i> January 28, 2020

POLICY TITLE: RETREATS

SECTION A

1. PURPOSE

The York Catholic District School Board recognizes the significance and importance of spiritual renewal by supporting, in partnership with their parish, retreat experiences for students.

Jesus himself went away to secluded places to pray and be in the presence of his Father: "On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was." (Mark 4:35)

"Parents, parishes, and schools are called to work closely together to ensure a worthy, solid preparation for both Religious Education and sacramental preparation for our young people." (p.17) *Sacramental Preparation in the Archdiocese of Toronto (2009)* "The retreat is a time for [young people] to gather with one another and spend time in prayer, reflection, and completing one or more activities" (p. 41). Providing time and space for liturgical celebration during the retreat is not only appropriate but highly desirable.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

In keeping with the Vision of the Board and the formation of young Catholic adults, it is an expectation of the York Catholic District School Board that all elementary students participate in at least one retreat during a sacramental year in partnership with the parish. It is an expectation that in our Secondary schools students participate in an annual retreat offered by the school **during the school day**. This is an integral part of being a student in a Catholic school, along with participation in daily prayer and liturgical celebrations, and the study of Religious Education.

3. PARAMETERS

- 3.1 Elementary retreats will be offered, where possible, in collaboration with the local parish to support the Parish Catechetical Programs.
- 3.2 Schools will engage motivating retreat facilitators to work with school staff in planning and leading the retreat. Retreat facilitators may be members of the school staff, board support staff, or appropriate external retreat leaders, including parish personnel/volunteers.
- 3.3 It is the expectation that all students participate in a school retreat as an integral part of the educational vision of the York Catholic District School Board.
 - 3.3.1 Elementary students not participating in sacramental preparation will still be expected to attend the school retreat.
 - 3.3.2 Recognizing that not all secondary students are Catholic, secondary retreats should be planned in a manner that is welcoming to students of other faiths.
- 3.5 No students will be disadvantaged academically because of their participation in their school retreat.
- 3.6 Wherever possible, retreats shall be offered in the local parish or in a setting other than the school that will promote quiet reflection, and appropriate liturgical celebration or other community prayer.
- 3.7 Retreat costs shall be kept to a minimum. An appropriate fee may be charged to offset the cost of the retreat and transportation and shall not pose any undue financial hardship to any families.
- 3.8 All of the parameters outlined in Policy 303 *School Organized and Continuing Education Excursions* shall apply to retreat programs.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Board of Trustees

- 4.1.1 To ensure that the annual Board budget includes a retreat fund allocation, administered by the Religious Education Department, to be used to subsidize student retreat costs at a minimum level of:
Elementary: Annually \$100 per bus per school (Schools must submit a copy of the paid transportation invoice along with a copy of the cheque stub to their Area Superintendent for approval and reimbursement by the end of June).
Secondary: \$2 per student per school, shall be allocated to each secondary school's General School Budget (GSB)

4.2 Director of Education

- 4.2.1 To oversee compliance with the Retreats policy and guidelines.

4.3 Senior Administration

- 4.3.1 To support the implementation and compliance with policies and related guidelines and procedures.

- 4.3.2 To ensure that principals are aware of the policy and their responsibilities and to support schools in their efforts to provide quality spiritual retreats.
- 4.3.3 To approve submissions of elementary retreat transportation invoices for reimbursement to appropriate schools.

4.4 Principals

- 4.4.1 To ensure that appropriate staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and to review and approve all planning for school retreats.
- 4.4.2 To ensure that financial hardship is not a barrier.
- 4.4.3 To work collaboratively with the local parish to support planning for sacramental preparation and for the ongoing Religious Education of the students in the school.
- 4.4.4 To ensure evaluations do not occur the day following a retreat.

4.5 Chaplaincy Teams (Secondary Schools)

- 4.5.1 To lead and collaborate with other school staff and students, in organizing, facilitating, and presenting the school retreat program.

4.6 Teachers

- 4.6.1 To ensure students receiving sacraments participate in a retreat and to work collaboratively with the Principal, Parish personnel, and, if applicable, retreat facilitators to plan and implement the retreat experience.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Retreat

A retreat is a one or more than one day experience in which students and staff go to a place outside of the regular school environment to be led in a time of spiritual reflection, prayer and renewal. "The retreat is a time for [young people] to gather with one another and spend time in prayer, reflection, and completing one or more activities".

6. CROSS REFERENCES

YCDSB Policy 303 [School Organized and Continuing Education Excursions](#)

YCDSB [Procedure School Organized and Continuing Education Excursions](#)

Anointed for Mission, Archdiocese of Toronto

Carved in the Palm of God's Hand, YCDSB, 2006

Chaplaincy Teams Guidelines and Services, YCDSB 2017

Sacramental Preparation in the Archdiocese of Toronto, 2009 Document

Renewing the Promise, Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO), 2018

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