



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

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August 22, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Sharon McMillan, Director of Communications

SUBJECT: OCSTA Statement re Ministry of Education's Release of the Elementary Health and Physical Education Curriculum

The following statement was issued by OCSTA today in response to the Ministry of Education's release of the elementary Health and Physical Education curriculum.

The revised Health and Physical Education curriculum released by the Ontario government reflects minor changes that include welcomed additional content to address topics associated with: consent, healthy relationships, mental health and emotional learning, cyber-safety, healthy eating and body image, concussions and the effects and consequences of vaping and cannabis.

All changes to this curriculum will be fully addressed through the Family Life Education program in publicly funded Catholic schools across Ontario. Catholic school boards have provided a family life curriculum consistent with the Catholic faith and the requirements of the Ministry of Education for more than 30 years.

In addition to the revised curriculum, the Ministry of Education has introduced an explicit expectation that school boards establish procedures to ensure that parents are informed in advance of learning expectations related to Human Development and Sexual Health, and that parents can choose to have their child or children exempted from instruction.

Recognizing that parents are the primary educators of their children, the *Fully Alive/Vivre Pleinement* program taught in Catholic schools already includes resources supporting comprehensive communication between school and home detailing the content of the program. Parents in Catholic schools have always had the right to remove their child from the program if they believe it is in the child's best interests, and they accept the responsibility of providing an education in sexuality in the home.

OCSTA will be working with our partners and the government to clarify the exemption policy mandated by the Ministry of Education as part of the revised HPE curriculum.