



P.O. Box 306, Binbrook, On L0R 1C0

Student: _____
School: _____
Grade (as of date below): _____

(Revised April 11, 2015)

Parent Communication With Schools Regarding Sensitive Lesson Content

Dear Principal(s) / Teacher(s):

Thank you for your commitment to partner with parents in the education of their child(ren).

The Ministry of Education, Boards of Education, and our schools recognize that we live in a multi-worldview society, consisting of many faiths and cultures, and at times instruction may be controversial to some families. The Minister of Education in a letter in 2008 stated:

Should the component of any course conflict with a religious belief of the parent (of minor-age children), ... the right to withdraw from that component of the course shall be granted, on the written request of the parent.

Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, Ontario Letter, April 2008

The Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and the Ministry of Education Religious Accommodation Policy also addresses religious accommodation:

Religious accommodation applies, but is not limited to: school opening and closing exercises; observances for Holy Days; prayer; dietary requirements; fasting; religious dress; modesty requirements in physical education; and participation in daily activities and curriculum.

As a family, we adhere to a set of values based on traditional Christian principles. It is understood that we live in a pluralistic society, and at times there may be planned lesson content that is sensitive to one culture or another. To assist the school, we have included (see reverse side) a description of content that our faith could find controversial, and from which we are often required to abstain.

I am/We are requesting to be informed about controversial learning prior to planned instruction. This request applies to all aspects of instruction, including the following:

- Curriculum content – topics and expectations in provincial and school board curriculum
Supplementary learning materials – materials that are not listed in curriculum documents but may be added to the curriculum at the discretion of the teacher, school, visiting agent, organization, etc.
Context of learning – expectations found in most subjects (music, math, language, science, etc.) may not be a direct conflict, but the context of learning (themes within songs, dramatizations, novels, etc.) may result in learning contexts that are sensitive.

Understanding of the content and/or the context of the learning will assist our family in the decision regarding the best accommodation for my child.

Accommodation may be as simple as a parental discussion with the child about how this information applies to them as a person of faith living in a pluralistic world. If planned learning includes content from which our faith requires us to abstain, exemption or an alternative learning activity may be necessary. HOWEVER, any accommodation should not draw negative attention to the child from peers, nor impose undue hardship upon teaching staff in the form of extra work load to create alternative assignments. We appreciate our teachers! I/We will work with the school to seek reasonable, relevant and realistic accommodations.

In summary, this is our effort to inform the school about sensitive subject content that we need to be informed about when planned instructions includes such content.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

First and last name of parent(s) legal guardians - please print

Signature – parent(s) legal guardian(s)

Date

Phone

Email

Mailing address

Sensitive Issues in Education Form

I/We request to be **advised prior to planned Instruction** containing the following checked () learning issues and topics. This request applies to content that is derived directly from curriculum documents and the context of (e.g. themes within novels, songs, dramatizations, etc.), including from supplementary lesson materials.

Student: _____

School: _____

Grade (as of date below): _____

A. Values/Religious Instruction

1. _____ **Macro evolution** – when presented as fact and not theory (i.e. as evidence of a purely materialistic universe and/or something that disproves the existence of God)
2. _____ **Values neutral education** – instruction of students in moral relativism and principles of situational ethics related to the religion of Secular Humanism
3. _____ **Universe/Earth worship** – worship of the cosmos, Mother earth (Gaia), plants, animals, etc.
4. _____ **Occult principles and practices** – witchcraft, black magic, spirit guides, Satanism, wizardry, New Age, astrology, horoscopes, psychic powers and other such practices
5. _____ **Religious practices** – required student participation in prayers, chants, meditations, postures, etc. closely associated with any religion

B. Family Life & Sex Education

1. _____ Instruction in **sex education**
2. _____ Discussion of **premarital or extramarital sexual activity** as natural, healthy, or something to be encouraged
3. _____ Instruction or activities that present **abstinence/chastity** as unrealistic or unachievable
4. _____ Instruction about, or provision of, **birth control** drugs and devices
5. _____ Instruction that provides a false sense of security with regard to the effectiveness of **condoms** in preventing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases
6. _____ Teaching that **abortion** is an acceptable method of birth control and/or that life does not begin at conception
7. _____ Instruction or activities about sexual conduct that we do not consider to be **age-appropriate information** (i.e. anal sex, oral sex, sadism, masochism, fetishes, bondage, etc.)
8. _____ Instruction or activities dealing with **homosexual, bisexual, or transgender** conduct and relationships
9. _____ Encouraging the acceptance of **infanticide or euthanasia**

C. _____ **Other (please explain)** _____

In addition, I am /we are requesting the following...

1. As long as I/we remain liable to provide support to my/our child, I/we request that all employees and agents of the **school refrain from counselling, treating, or referring** my/our child for non-emergency treatment or admission to a care facility, or providing birth control materials without my/our knowledge and prior consent.
2. My/our child **not be approached** for his/her consent to participate in any of the above activities, with the intent to nullify this communication.
3. This document be made available in my/our child's **permanent student record** and teachers who will be in contact with my/our child be informed about this communication and will inform me/us about sensitive curriculum (DOE 2210). In the event that a controversial issue arises in class, **I/we will accept responsibility to either:**
 - a. **speak with my/our child** to help him/her better understand how this information applies to him/her as a person of faith, OR ...
 - b. work with the school to seek reasonable, relevant, and realistic **accommodations**.

Thank you for your support,

Signature – parent(s) legal guardian(s) (or student 18 or over)

Date

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