

Title: **Flag Procedure**

Adopted: September 30, 1997

Effective: September 30, 1997

Amended/Reviewed: March 24, 2026

This procedure is to be interpreted and applied in accordance with the District's commitment to promoting and upholding Indigenous rights and human rights in all of its learning and working environments. This includes anti-colonial, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist approaches and actions to provide services and employment that are safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable, accessible and free from discrimination and harassment consistent with the Durham District School Board's (DDSB's) Indigenous Education Policy; Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy ("Human Rights Policy"); and Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention Policy.

1.0 RATIONALE

The Government of Canada outlines that the manner in which flags may be displayed in Canada is not governed by legislation but rather established practice. The rules applied by the federal government are in no way mandatory for individuals or organizations but rather serve as guidelines.

This Procedure outlines guidelines for the treatment of the national flag of Canada on all schools and DDSB buildings. The procedure addresses the care and related protocols for handling the Canadian flag, as well as the guidelines for flying and lowering the flag. Guidelines are also provided to explain how to display flags other than the Canadian flag.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Operations Department, in consultation with the Director of Education, may order the flying of a particular flag in support of community awareness initiatives which align with the Board's commitments and values.

This procedure is in accordance with Regulation 298 of the Education Act (1995).

Regulation 298 Under the Education Act states:

- 5 (1) Every school shall fly both the National Flag of Canada and the Provincial Flag of Ontario on such occasions as the Board directs.
- (2) Every school shall display in the school, the National Flag of Canada and the Provincial Flag of Ontario

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) recognizes the lowering of the Canadian flag to the half-mast position as a universal gesture of respect. The DDSB supports the lowering of national flags to half-mast in order to commemorate a collective sense of grieving.

3.0 FLYING OF FLAGS

- 3.1** All schools and DDSB buildings shall consistently fly a Canadian flag at all times outside the building while the school or building is occupied by any staff member, including holiday and break periods.
- 3.2** Schools and board buildings may fly any of the following flags, in addition to the Canadian flag:
- (i) the province of Ontario flag;
 - (ii) the local municipality, and/or Durham Region flags;
 - (iii) the Durham District School Board flag; and
 - (iv) flags on special occasions and/or to commemorate specific days of significance, as suggested by the Ministry of Education, and/or approved by the Operations Department.
- 3.3** The Canadian flag shall always take precedence over all other flags. For example, when three flags are flown, the flag of Canada should be at the centre and/or at the highest point of the group. When two flags are flown, the Canadian flag should be to the left of an observer facing the flags. Exceptions will apply when Indigenous flags are flown.
- 3.4** At the DDSB Education Centre, there are three flag poles which shall fly the Canadian flag, the provincial flag of Ontario, and the DDSB flag. On special occasions, the DDSB flag and/or the provincial flag of Ontario may be replaced, with the provincial flag given priority over the DDSB flag, to fly a flag specific to the occasion.
- 3.5** Flags may be flown by night as well as by day.
- 3.6** Where a school only has one flagpole, the school may fly an approved flag or special occasion flag below the Canadian flag, on the same pole.
- 3.7** The DDSB is committed to educating and bringing awareness to important dates of remembrance and significance through partnerships with community groups and agencies. Schools communicate with the broader community in many ways and may recognize these dates through websites, newsletters, social media and screens or monitors in use within schools and at the Education Centre.

4.0 HALF-MASTING FOR MOURNING

- 4.1** Direction for flags to be flown at half-mast will be provided by the Operations Department. Flags would be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset. As a general

rule, the centre of the flag should be exactly halfway down the flagpole. When hoisted to or lowered from a half-mast position, the flag should first be fully raised to the masthead.

4.2 Flags are flown at the half-mast position as a sign of mourning. All flags flown at schools and Board buildings shall be lowered to the half-mast position to commemorate the death of the following:

- (i) the Sovereign or a member of the royal family related in the first degree to the Sovereign (spouse, son or daughter, father, mother, brother or sister);
- (ii) the Governor General of Canada;
- (iii) the Prime Minister of Canada;
- (iv) a former Governor General;
- (v) a former Prime Minister;
- (vi) the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario;
- (vii) the Premier of Ontario;
- (viii) a Trustee.

4.3 On the death of the following, all flags flown at schools and board buildings within the person's riding or municipality shall be lowered to the half-mast position:

- (i) the Member of the House of Commons;
- (ii) the Member of the Legislature of Ontario;
- (iii) a Mayor.

4.4 Flags at the Education Centre may be lowered to the half-mast position on the death of an Education Centre staff member.

4.5 With the approval of the Operations Department, Principals may lower their flags to the half-mast position on the death of:

- (i) a staff member;
- (ii) a student;
- (iii) a prominent member of the school community.

Principals may request permission from the Operations Department to lower their flag(s) to the half-mast position for people other than current staff members or students, and if permission is granted, the flag(s) shall be lowered for an appropriate period of time.

4.6 The Operations Department may direct all schools and board buildings to lower their flags to the half-mast position:

- (i) on the death of a person who has made a significant contribution to the quality of life at the municipal, provincial, national, or international level, including victims of National/International tragic events;
- (ii) when directed by the Federal or Ontario Government or Ministry of Education;

(iii) on dates of special significance (ex. National Indigenous Veterans Day, Remembrance Day).

4.7 “Death” referred to in the sections above shall be taken to include the day of death and up to and including the day of the funeral.

5.0 INTERIOR FLAGS

5.1 The school office or front foyer of the school, shall display the Canadian flag and provincial flag. These may be moved to the auditorium for assemblies and other public events.

5.2 Canadian flags are to be displayed on proper flag stands or hung from a wall mounting.

5.3 Some flags in classrooms may be displayed with the permission of the Principal. These flags must be related to the curriculum and must be consistent with DDSB values, commitments and policies and must not promote or be symbols of any form of discrimination, racism or hate.

6.0 CARE OF FLAGS

6.1 All flags flown at schools and board buildings must be in good order and repair. Principals and custodial staff are responsible for the care and maintenance of all flags. When a flag becomes tattered or faded, and is no longer in a suitable condition for use, it should be destroyed in a dignified way. The Government of Canada website states the following:

The disposal of a flag may be handled in the following manner:

- *Flags made of natural fibres (wool, cotton, linen) should be burned in a dignified manner, privately, without ceremony or public attention being drawn to the destruction of the material.*
- *Flags made of synthetic material (nylon or polyester) should not be burned due to environmental damage and potential fire hazard. They should be respectfully torn into strips, with each element of the flag reduced to a single colour, so that the remaining pieces do not resemble a flag. The individual pieces should then be placed in a bag for disposal – the shreds of fabric should not be reused or fashioned into anything.*

6.2 The national flag of Canada should be handled with care and respect and should not be subjected to indignity.

6.3 Custodians can order replacement Canadian flags through supply. Exterior flagpoles must be purchased through Facilities Services. Interior flagpoles and stands and flags should be purchased through Purchasing.

6.4 When a flag is being raised or lowered, a flag should not touch the ground.

7.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Heritage Canada Website: [Rules for flying the National Flag of Canada – Canada.ca](#)

Government of Canada Website: [Disposal of the National Flag of Canada – Canada.ca](#)