

BUSINESS – SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Opening and Closing Exercises

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In response to the requirements set down by new and amended legislation (Section 304, Safe Schools Act 2000, Regulation 298), Policy (Policy/Program Memorandum #108) and Land Acknowledgement Procedure, Opening or Closing Exercises could reflect some or all of the following:
- 1.2 Land Acknowledgement
- All schools must ensure that this is part of the regular opening exercises AND comes before O Canada and all other announcements
- 1.3 O Canada
- All schools must ensure that this is part of the opening exercises
- 1.4 Pledge of Citizenship
- The principal may decide whether the Opening or Closing Exercises at a school will include the recitation of the Pledge of Citizenship
 - The principal's decision about reciting the Pledge of Citizenship must be consistent with the policies and guidelines of the Board
 - Before making his/her decision about reciting the Pledge of Citizenship at the beginning of each school year and must consult with the School Community Council (SCC)
 - The principal shall review his/her decision about reciting the Pledge of Citizenship at the beginning of each school year and must consult with the School Community Council
 - The following is the pledge of citizenship:

“I affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, and to her heirs and successors and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.”
- 1.5 God Save the Queen
- A Principal may include this
- 1.6 A Period of Silence
- A principal may include this

NOTE: The Board has decided not to include the reading of scriptural writings (including prayers and secular writings) as an option for Opening and Closing Exercises.

2.0 Exemptions from Opening/Closing Exercises

- 2.1 Legislation provides for exemptions from one or all of a school's Opening/Closing Exercises.

A pupil may be exempted in the following circumstances:

- In the case of the pupil who is less than 18 years old, if the pupil's parent or guardian applies to the principal of the school for an exemption
- In the case of a pupil who is at least 18 years old, if the pupil applies to the principal for an exemption

- 2.2 Principals receiving requests for exemption from Opening/Closing Exercises should require the parent/guardian or adult student to sign an exemption form (Appendix B).
- 2.3 Arrangements for supervision/accommodation of students exempted from the Opening/Closing Exercises will be made by the principal.
- 2.4 Exempted students are still required to report for attendance-taking at the same time as all other students.

3.0 Consultation With School Community Councils

- 3.1 When planning Opening/Closing Exercises for the school year, Principals should consult with SCC's regarding which Opening or Closing Exercises will be used and outline how exempted students will be supervised.

Appendix:

Appendix A – Land Acknowledgement

Appendix B – Pledge of Citizenship

Appendix C – Request for Pupil Exemption From Opening and Closing Exercises

Effective Date

2020-11-02

Amended/Reviewed

2000-12-18

2010-10-04

2016-07-04

2020-10-05

Land Acknowledgement (English)

The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.

Land Acknowledgement (French)

Le conseil scolaire du district de Durham tient à souligner que de nombreuses nations autochtones ont des relations à long terme, qui sont historiques et modernes, avec les territoires sur lesquels se situent notre conseil scolaire et nos écoles. Aujourd'hui, cette région abrite de nombreux peuples autochtones de l'île de la Tortue (Amérique du Nord). Nous tenons à souligner que la région de Durham se situe sur des territoires traditionnels qui comprennent ceux des Première Nation des Mississaugas de Scugog Island, du peuple Mississauga et le territoire visé par les traités avec la Première Nation des Chippewas de l'île Georgina. C'est sur ces terres ancestrales et visées par les traités que nous enseignons, apprenons et vivons.

PLEDGE OF CITIZENSHIP

I affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, and to her heirs and successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada, fulfilling duties as a Canadian citizen.

REQUEST FOR PUPIL EXEMPTION FROM OPENING/CLOSING EXERCISES

As outlined in Section 304 of the Safe Schools Act 2000, and Section 4 of Regulation 298, a pupil may be exempted from Opening/Closing Exercises where:

- A. In the case of a pupil who is less than 18 years old, if the pupil's parent or guardian applies to the principal of the school for an exemption from the exercises.
- B. In the case of a pupil who is at least 18 years old, if the pupil applies to the principal for an exemption from the exercises.

I AM REQUESTING THAT _____ BE EXEMPTED
FROM OPENING/CLOSING EXERCISES.

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Adult Student