



**Administrative Procedure**  
**Human Development and Sexual Health “Exemption Request” Procedure**  
Revised-04-12-2019

**Effective Date:** November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
**Responsibility:** Elementary Superintendent of Schools

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**1.0 Rationale:**

The Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum 162 states that school boards will have a policy and operational procedures that will allow students to be exempted, on an individual basis and at the request of their parent(s)/guardian(s), from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*.

**2.0 Definitions:**

**Period of instruction**

The period, including the beginning and end dates, during which instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health during health and physical education classes is delivered. This period could extend over several days or weeks, depending on individual schools’ calendars and teachers’ lesson plans.

**Unforeseen event**

An event that impairs a school’s ability to administer the “period of instruction”

### 3.0 Policy:

The Near North District School Board (NNDSB) is committed to ensuring that this administrative guideline and operating procedures will be followed when a parent (s)/guardian(s) requests that their student be exempted, on an individual basis, from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*.

Students will be exempted from instruction on an individual basis, according to the following conditions:

- 3.1** Exemptions are limited to instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019*. **Students will not be exempted from instruction related to any other expectations in this curriculum or related to expectations in other curriculum subjects.**
- 3.2** Exemptions will be granted only for instruction related to *all* the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student’s grade, and not for instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectations.
- 3.3** References to human development and sexual health made by teachers, board staff, or students outside the intentional teaching of content related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations are not included in the exemption procedure.
- 3.4** **There will be no academic penalty for an exemption.**
- 3.5** **There will be no assessment, evaluation, or reporting of exempted students’ achievement of Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in their particular grade.** Exempted students’ grade in health and physical education will be determined on the basis of the overall expectations in strand D of the curriculum, without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health.

As part of the implementation of this administrative guideline, schools *may* choose to hold meetings with parents and other community members to describe the purpose and scope of this process. Such meetings would assist parents in deciding if they wish to remove their children from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health.

### 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities:

#### 4.1 Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are the primary educators of their children with respect to learning and being a role model. It is therefore important for schools and parents to work together to ensure that home and school provide a mutually supportive framework for young people’s education.

**Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must be informed of the school board procedure that allows for students to be exempted, at their parent(s)/guardian(s) request, from instruction**

related to the Grade 1 to 8 Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be provided with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade and can choose to have their child exempted from instruction, on an individual basis, by completing and returning an exemption form for each child (Appendix B).

#### **4.2 Teachers:**

Teachers are responsible for using appropriate and effective teaching strategies to help students achieve the health and physical education curriculum expectations and addressing individual students' needs.

**Teachers will communicate with parents about what their children are learning** and follow this set of operational procedures that allow for students to be exempted, on an individual basis, at their parents' request, from instruction related to the Grade 1 to 8 Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D.

#### **4.3 Principals:**

Principals will ensure all members of the school community are kept well informed and will work in partnership with teachers and parent(s)/guardians(s) to ensure that each student has access to the best possible educational experience. They will provide support for the successful implementation of the health and physical education curriculum by emphasizing the importance of the curriculum within the framework of a healthy, safe inclusive and accepting school. Principals (with teachers) will implement this procedure to allow students to be exempted, on an individual basis, at their parents' request (*from instruction related to the Grade 1 to 8 Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D*).

### **5.0 Human Development and Sexual Health “Exemption Request” Procedure:**

In accordance with the expectations outlined in [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) 162](#), the Near North District School Board supports the parent(s)/guardian(s) role in their child(ren)'s learning, including the opportunity to request an exemption from participating in the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations of The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019.

This procedure is publicly available on the Near North District School Board website at <https://www.nearnorthschools.ca/programs/health-and-physical-education-curriculum/>

It is expected that the communications to parents required by this procedure will be issued within stated timelines every school year.

## **5.1 Notice and Communications:**

### **5.1.1 The principal (or designate) shall:**

**5.1.1.1** Provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade at least 20 school days prior to the start of the period of instruction. This information is contained in the grade- specific parent(s)/guardian(s) information letter – (Appendix B).

**5.1.1.2** Provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with a paper copy of the Exemption Request Form (APPENDIX A) found on the NNDSB’s public website ([www.nearnorthschools.ca](http://www.nearnorthschools.ca)) upon request, if they do not have access to the internet/printer to print the form.

**5.1.1.3** Receive and acknowledge receipt of the Exemption Request Form submitted by parent(s)/guardian(s).

**5.1.1.4** Make clear that, in the case of an unforeseen event, school boards and schools have the authority to move the period of instruction to a later date in the school year and must give notice of the change to parent(s)/ guardian(s) as soon as reasonably possible.

**5.1.2** The parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting an exemption from the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in Strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Health and Physical Education, 2019*. shall:

**5.1.2.1** Download the NNDSB’s Exemption Request Form (APPENDIX A) via the NNDSB’s public website ([www.nearnorthschools.ca](http://www.nearnorthschools.ca)).

**5.1.2.2** Submit a completed Exemption Request Form within the expected timeline. The deadline for parents to submit their completed exemption form or written request must be five school days before the start of the period of instruction;

**5.1.2.3** Complete the Exemption Request Form every school year they wish their child(ren) to be exempted.

**5.1.2.3.1** Parent(s)/guardian(s) without access to the internet and/or the ability to print the Exemption Request Form are able to request a paper copy from the principal at their child(ren)’s school.

## **5.2 Process:**

**5.2.1** The principal (or designate) shall:

**5.2.1.1** Allow students to be exempt from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations without academic penalty when a request for an exemption has been made from a parent/guardian in writing in accordance with this operational procedure.

**5.2.1.2** Develop a process to acknowledge the receipt of Exemption Request Forms (APPENDIX A).

**5.2.1.3** Make the final decision about whether to accept or reject a request for an exemption that does not fall within the parameters set out in this administrative guideline (i.e. if the exemption form is returned to the school during the scheduled period of instruction rather than by the school's official submission date).

## **5.3 Supervision of Exempt Students:**

**5.3.1** Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given the choice of how their exempted child will be supervised during the exemption period. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must choose one of the following options for their child(ren):

- a) to remain in the classroom during the exemption period without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health, and to be assigned work or activities by the teacher that are *unrelated* to Human Development and Sexual Health; *or*
- b) to leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal. The supervision of the student will be determined by the school according to the board's policy/procedure; *or*
- c) to be released into the care of the parent or the parent's approved designate.



Human Development and Sexual Health
Appendix A: Exemption Request Form

To request an exemption for your child, you must return this form prior to five days before the period of instruction.

Exemption Request

Having reviewed the grade specific curriculum expectations provided in the parent/guardian information letter, I would like my child to be exempted from all curriculum activities related to Human Development and Sexual Health. During the exemption period, I would like my child to:

- be released into my care or the care of my approved designate; or,
remain in the classroom without taking part in instructional activities related to Human Development and Sexual Health. I understand, in this circumstance, that my child's activities unrelated to Human Development and Sexual Health during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher; or,
leave the classroom and remain in the school under staff supervision. I understand, in this circumstance, that my child's activities unrelated to Human Development and Sexual Health during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal.

I understand and agree with the following statements:

- Only this form with parent/guardian signature that is received by the above deadline (five school days before the start of the period of instruction) will result in an exemption from the Human Development and Sexual Health component of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.
References to, or conversations about, sexual-health related concepts among teachers, school staff, or other students outside formal instruction are not subject to this exemption.

Student's Name

Student Grade

School

Teacher's Name

Date of Request

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Please note: You will receive an acknowledgement from the school to confirm the details of any exemption request. If you do not receive an acknowledgement by at least one day before the beginning of the instructional period related to Human Development and Sexual Health, please contact the school.



## Human Development and Sexual Health Appendix B: Parent/Guardian Letter

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We are writing to inform you that we will be covering the Human Development and Sexual Health Strand of the Ontario Health and Physical Education curriculum for your child on the following dates and times.

Below is a table that provides an overview of the key topics that are covered in the Human Development and Sexual Health topic within the Healthy Living Strand of the curriculum for Grades 1-8. For more details, please refer to the Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Health and Physical Education by going to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/2019-health-physical-education-grades-1to8.pdf> - pages. 299-302.

GRADE	Understanding Health Concepts	Making Healthy Choices	Making Connections for Healthy Living
1	- Body parts - Senses and functions	- Hygienic procedures	
2	- Stages of development - Body appreciation	- Oral health	
3	- Healthy relationships, bullying, consent - Physical and social-emotional development		- Visible and invisible differences
4	- Puberty – changes; emotional, social impact	- Puberty - personal hygiene and care	
5	- Reproductive system - Menstruation, spermatogenesis	- Self-concept, sexual orientation - Emotional, interpersonal stresses- puberty	
6	- Sexually explicit media	- Understanding of puberty changes, healthy relationships	- Stereotypes and assumptions – impacts and strategies for responding
7	- Delaying sexual activity - Sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBIs) - STBBIs and pregnancy prevention	- Sexual health and decision making	- Relationship changes at puberty
8	- Decisions about sexual activity; supports - Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, self-concept	- Decision making considerations and skills	- Relationships and intimacy

Parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting to have their child(ren) exempt from the Human Development and Sexual Health topics of the Healthy Living Strand are able to access the NNDSB’s Exemption Request Form via the board’s public website - <https://www.nearnorthschools.ca/programs/health-and-physical-education-curriculum/>. When completed, it is to be returned to the teacher/principal of their child(ren)’s school. Exemption requests must be received prior to five school days before the start of the period of instruction. Parent(s)/guardian(s) that are unable to access the internet and/or print the Exemption Request Form, are able to request a paper copy from the principal of their child(ren)’s school.

Sincerely,

Teachers Name