

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Students

Admission of Non-Catholic Students

STU #22

Revised: **October 2024**

### Background

Our schools exist in order to serve the educational needs of the residents of the division. We are legislated to offer the program of studies prescribed by Alberta Education and the mandate to do so within the context of the Catholic Church's mission to educate the whole person in the name of Jesus Christ.

The Education Act (Act) of Alberta recognizes that there is one publicly funded system of education in Alberta whose primary mandate is to provide education programs to students through its two dimensions, the public school and the separate schools. Under Section 10(2) of the Act, a board shall enroll a resident student of the board in the school operated by the board that is requested by the parent of the student if, in the opinion of the board asked to enroll the student, there are sufficient resources and facilities available to accommodate the student.

The Board of Trustees of Christ The Redeemer Catholic Separate School Division (Board) stipulates that this education must be based on the Catholic concept of the human person and that the objectives and purposes of education, as stated by Alberta Education, must be set in this total Christian concept.

The Congregation for Catholic Education (1988) declared the distinctiveness of the Catholic school in its religious dimension, and that this is to be found in the educational climate, the personal development of each student, the relationship established between culture, and the Gospel and the illumination of all knowledge with the light of faith.

The documents of Vatican II state that, as Catholics, we are called to unity with all believers. We are invited by our Church's teaching to respond to the concept of ecumenism and to appreciate the giftedness of other religious traditions.

The Board recognizes that many parents of the pluralistic and believing community, some of whom are not of the Catholic faith, are seeking an education that includes the spiritual and moral, as well as the cognitive, social and physical domains.

That given adequate resources, facilities and programs, Christ The Redeemer (CTR) Catholic Separate School Division welcomes students whose parents or guardians wish them: to participate in the academic, social, physical, and religious education programs offered in CTR Catholic's schools; to be educated in the context of the Catholic community, which is a sign of the reign of God as revealed in Jesus Christ; and, to receive all the benefits and assume all the responsibilities of membership associated with membership in the Catholic school community. The same welcome is extended to independent students seeking the same educational benefits.

That our staff members are guided by the following statement from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education when working with non-Catholic students:

*"Not all students in Catholic schools are members of the Catholic Church; not all are Christians. There are, in fact, countries in which the vast majority of the students are not Catholics ... The religious freedom and the personal conscience of individual students and their families must be respected, and this freedom is explicitly recognized by the Church. On the other hand, a Catholic school cannot relinquish its own freedom to proclaim the Gospel and to offer a formulation based on the values to be found in a Christian education; this is its right and its duty. To proclaim or to offer is not to impose, however; the latter suggests a moral violence which is strictly forbidden, both by the Gospel and by Church law."*

## Procedures

1. Parents/guardians of non-resident students (whose parents are not baptized within the Catholic faith) wishing to enroll their child in any school in CTR Catholic must make a request to the respective principal.
2. The principal shall begin the decision-making process to admit the applicant dependent on sufficient resources, facilities, and programs in the school after all resident students (current and projected) have been housed and an appropriate program is available. The principal shall consider classroom particulars, class size, physical space, and other factors as appropriate to determine sufficient resources, facilities, and programs.
3. If, in the opinion of the school principal, the above conditions have been met, the principal shall convene a meeting with the parents/guardians and, if a student is ten (10) years of age or older, the student to explain: the Board's vision, mission, fundamental beliefs and characteristics of a Christian community; the expectations that all students receive religious education instruction and participate in faith-based activities including "good works" projects; the nature and frequency of religious celebrations; liturgy and Mass attendance, and prayer; the special role of the Sacraments; the outward manifestations of our Catholic faith; the involvement of all students in regular prayer; the respect and tolerance we show to other religions; ways in which the Catholic faith differs from other Christian denominations; and, the fact that we expect non-Catholic students and their parents/guardians to respect and accept the Catholic character of our schools. The principal will also explain the content of the non-Catholic student registration form. The same procedures shall hold in the case of an independent student.
4. Applicants will be made fully aware of the nature and philosophy of a Catholic school prior to freely choosing to become a member of the school community; and applicants who later choose not to honor their responsibilities as members of the Catholic school community may withdraw their child.
5. If the school principal feels that the parents/guardians and student understand and accept the Catholic nature of the school, the principal shall review the records of all such students to establish their suitability for admission. If the principal feels that the student's academic needs can be met in the school, the principal may sign-off on the application for non-Catholic students. At this point the student is accepted in the school.
6. The principal shall have the remainder of the appropriate admission forms completed and they shall become part of the student's cumulative record.

## REFERENCES

- Alberta Education Act
- [The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School](#), a document of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome, 1988. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Publications, Ottawa, Ont.