

Catholic Equity and Inclusive Education Consultation Findings

In a review of consultation responses the following general themes/patterns emerge:

- There is some support for the policy as it is currently articulated
- There is relatively little discourse relating to specific topics such special education, racism, multiculturalism, poverty, student achievement. The exception were commentary from school staffs who imputed.
- There are relatively few responses addressing religious accommodation.

Where there are concerns, the following themes/patterns come to the fore:

1. Adherence to Catholic teachings as they relate to sexual orientation and sexual behaviour
2. Suggestions for rewording
3. The need for professional learning and resources to support the policy (in particular, training for teachers moderating student support groups including groups opposed to harassment related to sexual orientation.)
4. Concerns relating to implementation and oversight of the policy
5. Concern regarding the perceived gap between Church dogma and the teaching of religion in Catholic schools (i.e., CCC 2357 – 9)
6. Concern that the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, because of its adherence to the OHRC, will restrict the ability of teachers to teach about traditional marriage, and the Catholic understanding of human sexuality, and further that teachers will be obligated to teach and legitimate other family types and relationships (e.g., same-sex marriage, common law relationships)

Responding to the Concerns

1. Adherence to Catholic teachings as they relate to sexual orientation and sexual behaviour

Response: In all Catholic Boards , including TCDSB, a pastoral approach is informed by ICE’s ‘Pastoral Guideline for Students of Same Sex Orientation’ and the ‘Fully Alive’ curriculum.

2. Suggestions for rewording

Response: There were a number of different suggestions for rewording, but a predominant suggestion was with respect to the phrase “unjust discrimination” that appeared frequently. The phrase ‘no unjust discrimination’ raises the question as to what is ‘just discrimination. While there has been consideration for employing the phrase, the concern is well addressed by invoking the phrase ‘denominational rights’. This is a term well understood in civil courts in Canada.

3. Need for professional learning and resources to support the policy (in particular, training for teachers moderating student support groups)

Response: Professional learning is a key part of the strategy and must continue to be done in the context of our faith tradition and teachings. With respect to bullying awareness and prevention student groups including those groups that may want to specifically address bullying related to sexual orientation, resources, guidance for staff will be provided by ICE with the support of ICE and ACBO. These ACBO approved resources will be available to schools boards in September of 2011.

4. Concerns relating to implementation and oversight of the policy

Response: The Catholic Consortium has provided an implementation template. A template supported by the ACBO. This template will be used as a guide for the TCDSB implementation guideline. In terms of oversight there will be an annual report to the Ministry of Education from the director and an annual report to Board. As well the ACBO and our Ordinary, Archbishop Collins has offered counsel and will continue to do so.

“In other words, the Bishops believe that the proposed template will help ensure that our schools will remain faithful to Catholic teaching as they move forward with the Ministry’s directive. Each board must now develop its own policy, and the ACBO has invited each board to consult its own Bishop in this process. Of course, writing a policy is one thing, implementing it is another. The ACBO will continue to monitor this process, in collaboration with its partners in Catholic Education.”

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO October 4, 2010

5. Concern regarding the perceived gap between Church dogma and the teaching of religion in Catholic schools (i.e., CCC 2357 – 9)

Response: The TCDSB continues to follow faithfully Church teaching as it is transmitted through the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario by its provider, the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE). As a Catholic professional learning community we strive to ensure that there is an excellent knowledge base with respect to Catholic Church teachings for all.

6. Concern that the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, because of its adherence to the OHRC, will restrict the ability teachers to teach about traditional marriage, and the Catholic understanding of human sexuality, and further that teachers will be obligated to teach and legitimate other family types and relationships (e.g., same-sex marriage, common law relationships)

Response: Canadian law guarantees that Catholic teachers have a constitutional right to teach a Catholic understanding of the sacrament of marriage and human sexuality. Catholic Doctrine and Canadian law guarantees that teachers will not be obligated to endorse family types or relationships inconsistent with Catholic teaching

Equity and Inclusive Education - Consultation Process

Source Document: OESC Catholic Template

It is important to understand that the template used to create the draft policy was created by the Catholic Consortium. The consortium includes the Institute for Catholic Education (an arm's length agency for the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario), Ontario Catholic Trustees Association, Catholic Principals Council of Ontario and the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officer Association. Further the template was explicitly endorsed by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario on October 4, 2010.

“the Bishops believe that the proposed template (the OESC Catholic Template) will help ensure that our schools will remain faithful to Catholic teaching” October 4 2010

Process

The current Equity and Inclusive Education draft policy is the product of ongoing consultation undertaken throughout 2009-2011 involving a broad base of stakeholders including superintendents, teachers, principals, CEC central staff representing departments and associations and the TCDSB Race and Ethnic Relation Committee. The draft was shared with Bishop Boissonneau in November of 2010. As well both internal and external legal counsel offered advice on the draft. On January 24, the Equity and Inclusive Education draft policy was presented to trustees for consideration. Trustee input resulted in revisions to the policy in February 2011.

The revised policy was then taken to the broader community (staff, students, parents, parishioners, clergy, ratepayers) for consultation. For this purpose, a consultation tool, a place mat/template, was developed. The place mat presented the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy Statement and twelve regulations, aligned with the eight areas of focus contained in the Ministry's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy. The consultation tool, along with other resources, was made available on the TCDSB website and in hard copy. Stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft policy statement and regulations by responding to the following questions as they pertain to the eight areas of focus.

- How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?
- What would you foresee as the application of this regulation looking like for your community? For the TCDSB community? (*Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?*)

Consultation with Principals, CSACS and Staff

On March 8th and 10th principals were presented with the draft policy at their monthly superintendent meeting. They were offered material to share with CSAC and staff to lead them in a discussion. Materials were sent to CSAC chairs and principals by email. Additionally in April Archbishop Collin's DVD 'the Catholic Christian Vision of Equity and Inclusion' was sent to all schools as well as copies of the text of his statement to further deepen understanding and learning.

Additionally, on line materials were sent to CPIC, SEAC, TAPCE and the association as well as notification of the two community consultations.

Community Meetings

In April 2011, two community consultation meetings were held, the first on the evening of April 18 at St. Mary's Catholic High School, and the second on the evening of April 27 at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School. The April 11 consultation meeting consisted of a presentation by a panel of speakers. Stakeholders were given to opportunity to raise questions and issues by means of the "parking lot" method. Members of the panel responded to a representative sampling of stakeholder questions at the meeting.

Following an overview of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy presented by senior staff, the April 27 consultation meeting afforded stakeholders the opportunity to raise issues and formulate questions in small groups. Each group was furnished with a copy of the Religious Accommodation Guidelines and the Equity and Inclusive Education consultation template. Led by a staff moderator, each group was asked to record key points of its discussion. A representative from each discussion group shared a summary of the group's conversation with the larger group. In the final portion of the meeting, participants were invited to raise issues and direct questions to Superintendent Keyes. Questions and comments were recorded and completed consultation templates were collected.

Review of Stakeholder Responses

All comments, questions, and observations, whether submitted on line or in hard copy were collected and entered into a data base. A focus group of reviewers coded and sorted responses in order to identify key themes, concerns, and suggestions. A Frequency report of responses tabulated by regulation and consultation question was generated. These data informed the report to Board. (*Appendix A*)

Reflection

One must note that there has been a wide span of opinion and advice. The counsel offered was based upon sincerely held belief, perspectives and concerns. As a review committee we thank all for their statements, concerns and advise. The advice offered has not only informed the policy and regulation but will help shape the form of the implementation as the strategy moves forward.

Data concerning those responding to Consultation:

Breakdown of on-line respondents:

- The raw number of respondents = 127
- The number of CSAC's that responded = unknown
- The number of individuals that responded = not clear how many are just a single respondent or by groups
- The number responses that were duplicates from the same person = total of 5 from 4 people (one submitted three times)
- The number of respondents from outside our Board = 38 from outside the Board or unknown location
- The number of respondents from within our Board = 84 (from TCDSB/TCDSB community)
- The number of students, parents, teachers, principals, senior staff, parishioners

From within the GTA/TCDSB:	Frequency
Parent	23
Student	2
Staff	17
Parishioner	20
Alumni	1
Partner	0
Other	6
Unknown	15

- How many responses were submitted on-line, how many in hard copy = 122 responses are from on-line

Breakdown of hard-copy respondents:

- The raw number of respondents = 52
- The number of CSAC's that responded = unknown
- The number of individuals that responded = not clear how many are just a single respondent or by groups

- The number responses that were duplicates from the same person = unknown, assumed none
- The number of respondents from outside our Board = unknown, assumed none
- The number of respondents from within our Board = 25, the rest are unknown
- The number of students, parents, teachers, principals, senior staff, parishioners

From within the GTA/TCDSB:	Frequency
Parent	0
Student	6
Staff-groups	13
Parishioner	0
Alumni	0
Partner	0
Other	0
Unknown	33

- Total Raw Number of respondents: 179

Evening Consultations:

St Mary's Consultation may 18 , Total Registered :67, Total Attending by Head Count: 120 Note: Eight member of senior staff were in attendance.				
Registration numbers				
School	Parish	Both School and Parish	Staff	Other
12	26	20	3	0

Our Lady of Lourdes Consultation may 27 , Total Registered :111, Total Attending by Head Count: 150 Note: eighteen staff were in attendance to facilitated table discussion, not included in registration				
School	Parish	Both School and Parish	Staff	Other
38	19	37	4	9 non TCDSB, 4 did not identify

Response Frequencies by Regulation and Consultation Question

The following is a tabulation of coded stakeholder responses by frequencies sorted by consultation question and regulation:

Reg 1 – 1

Consistent with Catholic denominational rights the Board is committed to serving students, families and staff in its diverse Catholic community by incorporating the principles of equity and inclusive education in all aspects of its policies, programs, procedures and practices .

The Board recognizes the importance of anti-racism and anti-harassment policies in promoting and maintaining a Catholic learning and working environment that fosters racial and ethnocultural understanding.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
General Support for Regulation/ Support	32
Concern for normalizing same sex sexual behavior	22
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism	21
Strongly disagree	5
Statement is too general	7
Suggestion on rewording	2
Concern – assumes students learn at same rate	1
Need for PD	1
No response	17

Reg 1 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
Agreement, community is already equitable and inclusive	38
Reflect Church teachings	38
No gay/straight clubs	15
No direct application	6
Must confront prejudice and support minorities	3
Lead by example	2
No Response	39

Reg 2

The board recognizes the importance of anti-racism and anti-harrassment policies in promoting and maintaining a Catholic learning and working environment that fosters racial and ethnocultural understanding.

Equity On-line survey responses for Reg 2:

Reg 2 -1

	Frequency
No responses	61
Agreement and support	35
Suggestion on re-wording the Reg	11
Concern – about strict adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism	8
Strongly disagree	4
Responding asked for additional information, justification for the regulation	4
Need for PD	1
Disagree	1
Policy / regulation not necessary or redundant	1
Homophobia	1
Need for additional support or resources	1

Reg 2 – 2

	Frequency
No responses	79
Agreement	10
Suggestion on re-wording of the reg	6
Strongly disagree	5
Responding asked for additional information, justification for the regulation	5
Policy / regulation not necessary or redundant	4
Concern – about strict adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism	2
Must respect sexual orientation	2
Homophobia	1
Comment related to implementation	1
Alternate strategy suggested, elaboration on or enhancement of existing strategy	1

Reg 3 – 1

The Board is committed to an informed leadership philosophy that inspires, empowers and supports all stakeholders in our Catholic community to join together to implement institutional practices and behaviours that cultivate equity and inclusion.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	46
General Support for Regulation/ support	23
Concern – clarification / vague	12
Disagreement	7
Concern – homophobia	7
Concern – need to seek feedback/information	5
Concern – moral teaching	4
Suggest rewording	2
Not required	1
Catholic values – love thy neighbours	1

Reg 3 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	72
General Support for Regulation/ support	21
Concern – moral teaching	11
Concern – need to seek feedback/information	9
Concern – homophobia	3
Disagreement	3

Reg 4 – 1

The Board is committed to implementing an inclusive curriculum based on Catholic values and to reviewing resources, instruction, assessment and evaluation practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases so that students may maximize their learning potential.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	53
General Support for Regulation/ support	26
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism and Catholic law	14
Strongly disagree	11
Suggestion on re-wording	7
Concern – who will be defining “discriminatory biases and systemic barriers”	6
Concern – homophobia	4
Need for PD	4
Concern – hiring practices	2
Must respect sexual orientation	2
Alternate strategy	2

Reg 4 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	76
General Support for Regulation/ support	21
Strongly disagree	11
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism and Catholic law	7
Alternate strategy	6
Concern – student clubs contravene Catholic teaching	4
Must respect sexual orientation	3
Need for PD	2
Concern - homophobia	2
	1

Reg 5 – 1

The board recognizes that the effective development, implementation, and monitoring of equity and inclusive education policies and practises require the involvement of all partners in the Catholic School community.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	38
Agreement	30
Clarification / need more information	25
Concerned – religion	17
Concern – other	9
Re-word	2
	1

Reg 5 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	54
Agreement	34
Concerned – religion	26
Clarification / need more information	4
Concern – other	3
	1

Reg 6 – 1

The Board recognizes the critical connection between Catholic student leadership and improved student achievement and will strive to include the student voice in all aspects of the implementation of equity and inclusive education.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	47
Agreement	21
Strongly disagree / disagree	18
Somewhat agree	17
Clarification needed	9
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism	5
Already implemented	3
	2

Reg 6 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	71
Agreement	21
Strongly disagree / disagree	17
Somewhat agree	6
Already implemented	5
Clarification needed	1
	1

Reg 7-1

The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining partnerships with all members of our diverse Catholic community so that their perspectives and experiences are recognized.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	36
Agreement	32
Concerned – religion	22
Clarification / need more information	9
Re-word	2

Reg 7 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	58
Agreement	32
Concern – other	24
Concerned – religion	4
Need for PD	3
	1

Reg 8 – 1

The board is committed to implementing an inclusive curriculum based on Catholic values and to reviewing resources, instruction, assessment and evaluation practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases so that students may maximize their learning potential.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	49
Concern – moral teaching	18
General Support for Regulation/ support	16
Concern – clarification / vague	14
Concern – homophobia	11
Not required	6
Suggest re-wording	5
Catholic values – love thy neighbour	2
	1

Reg 8 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	71
General Support for Regulation/ support	14
Need for PD / resources / review material	11
Concern – moral teaching	7
Concern – clarification / vague	3
Disagreement	2
Concern – homophobia	2
Not required	1

Reg 9 – 1

The Board is committed to the values of freedom of religion and freedom from discriminatory or harassing behaviour based on religion and will take all reasonable steps to provide religious accommodation within the legal rights afforded to the Catholic school system. (see Religious Accommodation Guideline.)

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	53
Agreement	26
Concerned – religion	5
Concern – other	4
Re-word	1

Reg 9 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	74
Agreement	20
Concern – other	11
Re-word	1

Reg 10 – 1

The Board is committed to the principle that every person within the Catholic school community is entitled to a respectful, positive and Christ-centred school climate where the learning and working environment is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	45
General Support for Regulation/ support	41
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism	7
Alternate strategy suggested, elaboration on or enhancement of existing strategy	5
Policy / regulation not necessary / redundant	4
Responding in asking for additional information, justification for the regulation	4
Homophobia	4
Suggestion on re-wording reg	3
Concern about gay culture	3
Must respect sexual orientation	2

Disagree	2
Need for additional support or resources	1
Need for PD	1

Reg 10 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	69
General Support for Regulation/ support	21
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism	6
Disagree	6
Policy / regulation not necessary / redundant	6
Alternate strategy suggested, elaboration on or enhancement of existing strategy	4
Strongly disagree	3
Respondent asking for additional information, justification for the regulation	3
Suggestion on re-wording the reg	1
Concern about gay culture	1
Need for additional support or resources	1
Comment related to implementation	1

Reg 11 – 1

The board, in its delivery of student centered Catholic education services, is committed to providing the school community with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers under the *Code*.

Question: How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	51
Agreement	21
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism and Catholic law	9
Suggestion on re-wording	7
Concern – hiring practices	7
Concern – homophobia	5
Concern – student clubs contravene Catholic teaching	5

Concern – who will be defining “discriminatory biases and systemic barriers”	2
Need for PD	2
Must respect sexual orientation	2
Alternative strategy	2
Strongly disagree	1

Reg 11 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	72
General Support for Regulation/ support	13
Concern – about adherence to moral teachings as defined by Catechism and Catholic law	10
Concern – student clubs contravene Catholic teaching	10
Alternate strategy	9
Concern – homophobia	8
Concern – hiring practices	4
Somewhat agree	4
Clarification needed	3
Suggestion on re-wording	1
Must respect sexual orientation	1

Reg 12 – 1

The Board is committed to assessing and monitoring its progress in implementing the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy; to embedding the principles of equity and inclusive education into all Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices; and to communicating these results to the broader community.

How does this statement impact you as a stakeholder? What questions arise when you read this statement?

	Frequency
No response	65
Agreement	18
Clarification / need more information	10
Concern – other	4
Re-word	1

Reg 12 – 2

What would you foresee as the application of this regulation for your community, for the TCDSB community? (Under this regulation, ideally what would equity and inclusion look like?)

	Frequency
No response	81
Agreement	14
Concern – other	9
Need for PD	1
Clarification / need more information	1

Additional Comments

	Frequency
No response	53
Homophobia	27
Concern – religion	22
Agreement	16
Need for PD	1
Clarification / need more information	1