



**TRADITIONAL VALUES / ISSUES IN
EDUCATION LETTER, FORMS, &
EXPLANATORY NOTES
(Traditional Protestant)**



Should the component of any course conflict with a religious belief of the parent (*of minor-age children*), or a student aged 18 or older, the right to withdraw from that component of the course shall be granted, on the written request of the parent ..."

Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, Ontario

P.E.A.C.E. (Public Education Advocates for Christian Equity)
(Rev. July 15, 2012)

Our Family's Traditional Values Letter

Date: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Child's Name: _____

School Board: _____

Child's School: _____

School Address: _____

Grade Level (as of the date the form is completed): _____

Dear Principal(s) / Teacher(s):

I/we wish to thank the school for its commitment to my/our child and his/her education. As a parent(s)/guardian(s) I/we understand the responsibility of being "Partners in Education" and are committed to working with the school to achieve the best for my/our child.

The school instructs children from many cultural and spiritual backgrounds. Pluralistic Boards of Education attempt to respect and understand the values of all faiths and cultures that attend the schools. An understanding of the cultural and spiritual background of each child helps the teacher(s) to address the goals of the teaching profession:

- **connect the learning in the classroom to the child's cultural and spiritual understandings** (Standards of Practice in the Teaching Profession (1999, 2006)

- **model respect for spiritual and cultural values** (Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession http://www.oct.ca/standards/ethical_standards.aspx?lang=en-CA)

As a family, we adhere to a set of values based on traditional Christian principles. I/we believe that it is our responsibility, to teach these values to our children, and that the application of these values is important for achieving eternal life.

To assist the school, I/we have included the attached information that is intended to identify the issues that our faith would find sensitive, and must abstain from participating.

My/Our request is that when concepts or values, as part of planned curriculum, are presented that may conflict with the values of the home, the teacher(s) will contact me/us prior to instruction. With an understanding of what is to be taught, and the context of the learning materials (novels being used, songs to be sung, dramatization themes, etc – which are not identified directly in the Ministry of Education curriculum documents) we will be able to talk with the child about what is being learned and help them to understand how this information applies to them, assisting the child to better understand who they are and how they fit in a multi-faith, multi-cultural community.

In the event that a planned learning activity (Ministry of Education skill, or contextual setting of the learning) is something that our faith requires that we abstain from, I am willing to work with the school to seek relevant and realistic accommodations.

I/We appreciate being able to share this with the school. Thank you for your respect and understanding.

Sincerely,

Signature of Parent or Student *(if 18 years of age or older)*

TRADITIONAL VALUES / ISSUES IN EDUCATION FORM

Student Name: _____

Grade Level (as of the date on this form): _____

School Board: _____

School: _____

School Address: _____

Name (Parent/Guardian): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

(Parent or Student if 18 or older)

Dear Teachers and Principal:

Considering the **secular humanistic** approach often applied to subjects and issues within public education, and our faiths requirement that we abstain from certain activities, I/we request to be advised prior to any planned instruction containing the following issues and topics (either content that is derived directly from Ministry Curriculum documents, or the context of learning (e.g. novel, songs in the class, dramatization, etc., that incorporate these topics/themes) :

a. Values/Religious Instruction

1. ___ Values neutral education - instruction of students in “moral relativism” and principles of situational ethics. This “ism” is a central tenet of the religion of “Secular Humanism”;
2. ___ Occultic principles and practices - witchcraft, black magic, spirit guides, Satanism, wizardry, new age, channeling, astrology, horoscopes, psychic powers and other such practices, which are contradictory to Judeo-Christian principles;

3. ___ Environmental Worship - placing environmental issues/concerns above the value of Judeo-Christian principles and human life;
4. ___ **Darwinian Evolution** when this is presented as fact and not theory, i.e. as evidence of a purely materialist origin of the universe or as something that disproves the existence of a creator (God).
5. ___ Other (please explain)_____

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b. Family Life & Sex Education

1. ___ Instruction in sex education
2. ___ Discussion of **Premarital or Extramarital Sexual Activity** as natural, healthy, or something to be encouraged
3. ___ Instruction or activities about abstinence/chastity that present it as unrealistic or unachievable
4. ___ Instruction or activities about sexual conduct that we determine to be not be age-appropriate information (anal sex, oral sex, sadism, masochism, fetishes, bondage, etc.);
5. ___ Instruction or activities dealing with homosexual, bisexual conduct and relationships
6. ___ Instruction or activities about transgenderism
7. ___ Instruction about, or provision of birth control drugs and devices;
8. ___ Teaching that abortion is an acceptable method of birth control and that life does not begin at conception;
9. ___ Encouraging the acceptance of infanticide or euthanasia;
10. ___ Providing a false sense of security with regard to the effectiveness of condoms in preventing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases;
11. ___ Other (please explain) _____

c. Medical Treatment

___ As long as I remain liable under the Family Law Act of Ontario to provide support to my child, I request that all employees and agents of the school board refrain from counseling, treating, or referring my child for non-emergency treatment, admission to a care facility, or personal assistance services within the meaning of the Health Care Consent Act of Ontario, without my knowledge and prior consent; subject only to a written waiver of this instruction for particular forms of treatment in specified circumstances, and circumstances qualifying as "emergencies" under that statute.

I/We request that:

1. My/our child not be approached for his/her consent to participate in any of the above activities, with the intent to nullify this communication; and

2. As teachers are to '**connect learning to the child's life experiences and cultural and spiritual understanding**'(1), Ontario College of Teachers' 'Standards of Practice in the Teaching Profession (1999, 2006)', and "**model respect for spiritual and cultural values** (2)", this information will be important for each teacher who is educating the child. Therefore, it is requested that teachers who will be in contact with the child be informed about this communication, and that this document be made available in the child's OSR. ...*"an OSR will contain additional information identified as being conducive to the improvement of the instruction of the child."*(3)

- 1) Standards of Practice http://www.oct.ca/standards/standards_of_practice.aspx?lang=en-CA
- 2) Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession, http://www.oct.ca/standards/ethical_standards.aspx?lang=en-CA
- 3) Ontario Student Record Guideline 2000, Section 3

TRADITIONAL VALUES - EXPLANATORY NOTES

Dear Principal(s) and Teacher(s):

It is difficult for a public school system to be all things to all people. For this reason I/we, the parents/guardians, wish to share with you that my/our child is raised in traditional Judaeo-Christian principles(1). I/we feel that it is important that information about these sensitive issues be taught in a way that positively connects the learning in the classroom to the child's Judaeo-Christian understanding.

To prevent conflict and confusion in the mind of my/our child, and to promote success, I/we request that topics, such as those listed, not be introduced to him/her without prior consent. Further, I/we ask that when opportunity arises my/our child would be encouraged to connect the learning in the classroom to their spiritual understanding by incorporating his/her values within their school work (e.g. writing about what they believe with respect to a topic, or completing a piece of art work that includes communicating their faith).

In an effort to promote understanding, please find below explanatory notes about the issues listed that could lead to conflict.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Religious Instruction

Moral Relativism and Situational Ethics: Secular Humanism, the value system often assumed by public institutions as acceptable to everyone, has been identified as a religion in the courts. It has a set of doctrine outlined in the Humanist Manifestos (I & II) and the Declaration of Secular Humanism (1980). Teachings from the position of moral relativism and situational ethics, basic tenets of secular humanism, are directly opposed to our family's values and my/our child's spiritual understandings of absolute rights and wrongs.

Environmentalism: Naturalism, which denies the existence of a Creator, is another foundational principle of the value system/religion of humanism. Humanist Manifesto II identifies the goal that the doctrines of humanism, including naturalism, must be taught through the public arena, including education. This family's faith-based spiritual understanding requires that we be responsible stewards of all that our Creator (God) has entrusted to us. As such, we do agree with many of the goals of conservation, however, these principles are often presented from a humanistic (for the benefit of man to live as long as possible) or naturalistic (deifying the Earth) worldview which is in conflict with our teachings. Our faith requires that we place nothing above our God. Meeting expectations of conservation would be more successful, for our children, if connected to their spiritual understanding of being 'responsible to their Creator.

Darwinian Evolution: The theory of evolution has undergone considerable development since Charles Darwin first proposed it; the word "evolution" thus has a number of meanings. Some of these meanings may be compatible with our family's Bible-based Christianity whilst others are not. Our family believes that God is the ultimate origin of universe and of life. Teaching my/our child about evolution will be most successful if discussion stayed within the bounds of the science behind genetic mutations and natural selection without extrapolating beyond the science to speculate from a secular humanist perspective on the origins and meaning of human life.

Family Life and Sex Education

I/we choose to inculcate in my/our child by precept and example the virtues of purity, chastity, and prudence, which is in keeping with s.264 (1)(c) of the Education Act of Ontario (2).

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Trans-Gendered Issues: People do have the liberty to choose the lifestyle, and value system, they wish to lead. Alternative lifestyles, based upon sexual orientation, is oppositional to families adhering to Judeo-Christian spiritual values. To reduce spiritual conflict within the child, the learning must positively connect to the child's life experiences and spiritual understandings, and take place only when the child has developed beyond a certain level of spiritual maturity and confidence.

For Catholic Families - The Catholic Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No 2357) teaches that *"homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complimentary. Under no circumstance can they be approved."*

Sex Education: The instruction of conception and contraception, as per Ministry of Education expectations, may be acceptable. At the appropriate grade level (as suggested within Ministry documents) our child could be instructed in these topics, provided the learning positively connects the child's life experiences and spiritual understandings of the value of abstinence from sexual activity until marriage. An example of an activity that positively connects the child's spirituality to the curriculum expectations would be: the examination, within supportive peer groups, of the practical, medical, social, emotional and spiritual reasons their value system teaches that abstaining from sexual activity until marriage is the only safe and healthy choice.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases & Condoms: The teaching of this topic cannot effectively be achieved for our child without interfering with his/her spiritual understandings of the value of abstinence until marriage. The issue of STD's and condoms deal with values and principles that are most often delivered from a humanist perspective. This perspective is in opposition to our family's spirituality and could negatively affect the teachings at home and our child's spiritual development. I/we are requesting advance notice of any curriculum materials involving these topics so we can ascertain whether our child should remain in class during this section of the curriculum.

Abortion: The acceptance of abortion by society is a value consistent with secular humanism, which accepts that our present physical life is the only life that we have any knowledge of (ie. there is no life after death). As a result, we need to make the most of it while we are alive. Thus the rationalization that *"I should have control over my body and be able to make decisions about it,"* takes priority within public education and other public arenas where humanism is the dominant value system. This information and approach fails, however, to connect the learning of this form of birth control to our child's life experiences and spiritual understandings of: life after death; the importance of the teachings of their Lord and making decisions that are consistent with their value system; the decisions made in this life affect their relationship with their Lord and could have consequences for their eternal life; human life as a gift of the Creator; and the value of human life.

Medical Consent: The reason for this request is to be sure that such treatment, counselling, etc. is consistent with our spiritual value system.

IN THE EVENT A CONFLICT ARISES

In the event that the teacher identifies that some materials or curriculum may be in conflict with the requests outlined, I/we (parents/guardians) would appreciate that the teacher contact me/us for clarification.

In the event that I/we (parents/guardians) identify a conflict has arisen, I/ we will take the following steps to work with the school to dialogue, and address the issue:

1. Parents will communicate directly with the teacher to reach an understanding and resolution.
2. In the event that the issue cannot be resolved at the parent/teacher level an interview will be requested with the principal.
3. If the issue is still not resolvable, a meeting will be requested with school board officials (Superintendent & trustee) in an attempt to resolve the issues.

1 Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Part 1 of the Constitution Act, 1982) states that “everyone has the: (a) freedom of conscience and religion; (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression; (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and (d) freedom of association.”

2 S. 264(1)(c) of the Education Act of Ontario.”[Teachers have a duty]...to inculcate by precept and example respect for religion and the principles of Judaeo-Christian morality and the highest regard for truth, justice, loyalty, love of country, humanity, benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, purity, temperance and all other virtues.”

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Dear Mr. _____

Thank you for your email about the teaching of sexual diversity in schools.

Under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods, and facilities, and without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or handicap. Our government is strongly committed to upholding this code, and has ensured these principles are affirmed in curriculum programs and policies for schools.

Publicly funded education strives to teach students to appreciate diversity and respect differences. Our civil values include respect for sexual orientation. The curriculum is designed to reflect the diversity of Canada, and teachers are expected to implement the curriculum in such a way that students can see the variety of their own backgrounds, interests, and experiences reflected in it.

A curriculum review process initiated in February 2003 has been designed to build on the strengths of the current curriculum and identify areas for improvement. This continuous cycle of review is not a development of a completely new curriculum, but is intended to ensure it remains current, relevant, and age-appropriate from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

The revised documents released as part of the curriculum review process now contain a section on antidiscrimination education that stresses the need for students to respect the diversity of students' various backgrounds, interests, and experiences. A number of courses in our curriculum policy documents contain references to sexual orientation, homophobia, and gay rights. The review of the Social Sciences and Humanities, and the Health and Physical Education curriculum policy documents is now underway. There is an opportunity as part of these reviews to ensure that the documents are more inclusive in nature and reflect the diversity of Ontario society.

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Providing all students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and respectful environment is a responsibility in which school boards and schools play an important role. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. Should a component of any course conflict with a religious belief held by a parent or a student aged eighteen or older, the right to withdraw from that component of the course shall be granted on the written request of the parent or student.

The Provincial Code of Conduct states that all members of the school community must respect and treat others fairly, regardless of factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Further, the revised Code also states that members of the school community must not engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias.

In conclusion, as a government we are committed to helping every student reach his or her full potential in schools that are safe, caring, and inclusive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education