



Opening and/or Closing Exercises

200.11

Adopted:	November 1, 2001
Last Reviewed/Revised:	October 13, 2020
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	TBA

PURPOSE:

To provide direction for all schools in the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board regarding opening and/or closing exercises.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board will ensure that opening and/or closing exercises are held in each school under its jurisdiction in accordance with the requirements of the regulations, which includes the singing of "O Canada".

In keeping with the Board's Strategic Plan for Catholicity, the schools will ensure prayers and/or scripture readings are an integral part of opening and/or closing exercises.

REFERENCES:

- [Education Act Section 265 Duties of Principal – \(e\) timetable](#)
- [Education Act Section 304 Opening and Closing Exercises](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 298 – Operation of Schools: Section 4 Opening Exercises](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 298 – Operation of Schools: Section 11 Duties of Principals](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 298 – Operation of Schools: Section 20 Duties of Teachers](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 435/00 – Opening or Closing Exercises](#)
- [Ministry of Education Program/Policy Memorandum 108 – Opening and Closing Exercises in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools](#)

FORMS:

- FORM A - Exemption Request Form – Parent
- FORM B - Exemption Request Form – Student, at least 18 Years of Age

DEFINITIONS:

Exemption: For those eligible, a request to be exempted from the singing of "O Canada", but not from prayers.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Outlined below are the procedures that should be carried out for opening and/or closing exercises:

1.0 Superintendent of Education

- 1.1 Will review and update administrative procedure as required.
- 1.2 Will ensure that the administrative procedure is implemented by the principals and teachers in schools.



- 1.3 Exemption Requests Form A or B received through the school principal by a parent/guardian or a student who is at least 18 years of age will be reviewed and require approval by the Superintendent of Education.

2.0 Principal

- 2.1 Will ensure that the administrative procedure is implemented in the school.
- 2.2 Consult with the Catholic School Advisory Council to establish procedures for daily opening and/or closing exercises; the exercises will be reviewed annually.
- 2.3 Scripture readings and/or prayers, along with "O Canada" are integral parts of all opening and/or closing exercises in schools and selected assemblies.
- 2.4 Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of students under 18 years of age and/or students over 18 years of age who are eligible for an exemption are informed to apply to the school principal. The exemption will be for "O Canada" only, not from school prayers.

Please note: A student who is 16 or 17 years old who is eligible for an exemption and has withdrawn from parental control may apply to the school principal for an exemption.

3.0 Teachers

- 3.1 Will ensure that the administrative procedure is implemented in the class.
- 3.2 Will ensure that students in the classrooms with an approved exemption are being carried out.



Form A - Exemption Request Form – Parent

Administrative Procedure: Opening and/or Closing Exercises# 200.11

The principal will exempt students from the singing of “O Canada” upon annual application, if the parent/guardian of a student under 18 years of age applies in writing to the principal for an exemption; or a student who is at least 18 years of age, applies in writing to the Principal to be exempted.

Please be advised I am requesting that my child, a student less than 18 years of age:

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Be exempt from:

- The singing of O Canada

For the current school year.

Parent signature

Month: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____



Form B - Exemption Request Form – Student, At least 18 Years of Age

Administrative Procedure: Opening and/or Closing Exercises# 200.11

The principal will exempt students from the singing of “O Canada” upon annual application, if the student is at least 18 years of age or older applies in writing to the principal for an exemption; or a student who is at least 18 years of age, applies in writing to the Principal to be exempted.

Please be advised I am a student at least 18 years of age.

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I am requesting that I be exempt from:

- The singing of O Canada

For the current school year.

Signature

Month: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____