

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: ENGAGING IN PUBLIC EVENTS

Rationale:

As a community of CISVA schools, it is critical that we give primary consideration to our mission, vision, and philosophy when engaging in public events or programs. It is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to our students intentional discipleship, that our faith matters and is taken seriously, and to underscore the importance of public engagement through the lens of faith. The following is intended to assist Principals and staff in discerning student participation in public events.

We will not attend events or programs:

1. that oppose or undermine our priority of evangelization;
2. that inhibit or work against instilling a Catholic Worldview;
3. where the purpose and/or mission of the event, program, or organization opposes the Church's mission;
4. what deny or denigrates the dignity of the human person;
5. where there is an affirmation of immoral choices, attitudes, or behaviours (rather than affirming the person);
6. where there is evidence the event may contradict Catholic moral or social teaching (explicitly or by implication);
7. that are inappropriate for the age(s) and grade(s) of participating students.

Teacher's responsibilities:

- *Consider if the event/experience meets the demands of the curriculum.*
- *Before proposing an event/experience research and prepare appropriately, taking into account age suitability and context*
- *Seek Principal's approval for participation in event/programs*
- *After Principal approval is given to obtain the informed consent of parents. Refer to relevant policies (e.g. Policy 409 Field Trip/Off Site Experiences, Policy 433 – Learning Resources)*
- *Consider how non-attendance at an event or activity may be used as a teaching moment to remind students of the reasons and rationale behind the decision not to attend.*

Preparation and debrief are essential in making the most from the experience. These are some questions to consider when determining participation in a public event or activity:

- Would I recommend families (with their child/children) attend this event?
- Should the off stage behavior of role models influence our decision to attend?
- If during the event, we find it inappropriate (or in conflict with our guideline) what is our exit strategy?
- If an organization does good work in a specific area, but in other areas is in conflict with our faith, how do we discern our participation?
- Are we helping our students understand the larger context to any given event – e.g. the corporate and celebrity nature?