

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

NO. 203

SUBJECT: OPENING OR CLOSING EXERCISES

Legal References: *Education Act: Section 265 Duties of Principal--Timetable; Section 304 Opening and Closing Exercises; Ontario Regulation 298—Operation of Schools: Section 4 Opening Exercises; Section 11 Duties of Principals; 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*

Related References: *Administrative Procedure 201 School Day, Organization of; AP 202 School Day and Subject Time*

1. Requirements for School Exercises

The director of education has developed this administrative procedure to give direction to school administrators for implementing the requirements of the *Education Act* and Regulations with respect to opening or closing exercises in schools.

2. Procedures to be Followed

- 2.1 The opening or closing exercises must include the singing of *O Canada*.
A student is not required to sing the national anthem or recite the pledge of citizenship if the adult student or parent/guardian requests in writing, to the principal, that the student be exempt.
- 2.2 Opening or closing exercises may include the recitation of the following pledge of citizenship:
I affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, and to her heirs and successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.
- 2.3 The principal, in consultation with the school council, may decide whether or not to include the recitation of the pledge of citizenship in the opening or closing exercises. The decision must be reviewed annually at the beginning of the school year.
(Regulation 435/00)
- 2.4 The opening or closing exercises may include the singing of *God Save the Queen*.
- 2.5 Readings used in opening or closing exercises may be made from either religious or secular sources representative of Ontario's multicultural society. These may include scriptural writings, including prayers, or secular writings.
- 2.6 The Resource Guide, *Opening or Closing Exercises for Public Schools in Ontario (1993)* provides direction for the selection of appropriate materials.
- 2.7 The opening or closing exercises may include a period of silence.