

	EDUCATION	III-A-9
<b>STRAIT REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD</b> <i>Excellence in Lifelong Learning</i>  <b>POLICIES AND GUIDELINES</b>	<b>School Organization and Administration</b> <b>NATIONAL ANTHEM IN SCHOOLS</b>	
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### **NATIONAL ANTHEM IN SCHOOLS**

#### **Policy Statement**

The Strait Regional School Board believes that the singing of the Canadian National Anthem, *O Canada*, is an important part of citizenship education. As such, all schools in the Strait Region are required to play the anthem on a daily basis and at special events.

The Strait Regional School Board recognizes the importance of providing students with learning experiences that enable them to practice the democratic principles upon which their society is based, to understand the foundations of their democratic society and to develop and demonstrate their understanding of the rights and responsibilities of Canadians and the dynamics of being part of an international community.

The overall purpose of this policy is to promote a sense of citizenship and loyalty to Canada, to further develop students' appreciation for Canada's qualities and values as a nation and to assist students in developing a stronger sense of Canadian identity and pride in being a Canadian.

#### **Guidelines**

1. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that the playing of *O Canada* takes place at the beginning of each school day and at appropriate school events.
2. Annually, schools are required to provide age-appropriate instruction related to the Canadian national anthem, including its lyrics, the meaning of the anthem, its status as the official national anthem of Canada, the significance and history of the anthem.
3. In order to support the respectful singing of *O Canada*, schools may access appropriate recordings to use on their public address system to facilitate student and staff participation as well as other resources, including posters with the lyrics.

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4. The language of instruction related to the Canadian national anthem will normally be provided to all students in English. Instruction in the French version may be provided instead of the English version to students in French Immersion programs.
5. Instruction related to the Canadian National Anthem may be provided to students in French, Gaelic and/or Mi'Kmaq as part of these language programs.
6. Students, staff, parents/guardians and visitors to the school are expected to show respect during the playing of *O Canada*. In particular, they are required:
  - To stand at attention, facing the flag if it is displayed, with hands by their sides or behind their back;
  - To sing the National Anthem or remain silent; and
  - To stop walking, if in hallways or common areas, and wait until the anthem is over.
7. Students may be excused from activities related to the Canadian National Anthem in accordance with the following provisions:
  - Exemption from participation will be granted when a written request to the principal is received from a parent/guardian and the request provides a reason which the principal considers valid.
  - When exemption from participation is granted, students will be permitted to leave the classroom or place where the instruction or exercises are taking place for the duration of the instruction or exercises; or remain in the classroom or place without taking part in the instruction or exercises.
  - If a student is to be excused for a period of time which the principal considers lengthy, an alternative learning activity is to be provided for that student.
  - Every effort is to be made to respect the dignity of students who are excused from participation in activities related to the Canadian National Anthem.