

Admissions Resource Booklet I OACS Church Relations Committee

Introduction

The Canadian Protestant church traditions with respect to Christian schooling arose from a practical need to clarify the unique position of Alliance schools in the Ontario church environment. This is essentially a paper about school-church relations and about which institution dominates. The paper is intended to serve several needs, both inside Alliance schools and with respect to the outside public. There is a great deal of confusion out in the public, and also in the school societies about this matter, and so it was thought to be helpful to develop a number of documents which would clarify the position of the Alliance and help school society board members, teachers, and parents interested in Christian education sort out what kind of Christian education they want for their children.

From a very practical point of view, it is necessary to develop an information base from which admission committees and administrators in Alliance schools can make fair and informed decisions about admitting students from a wide variety of backgrounds.

This is an original document, because there is virtually no coherent information available about denominational attitudes with respect to Christian schools. And it is this attitude which is greatly responsible for official denominational support of the public school systems in many quarters. This document is part of a series. The first document, a major research paper by Rev. Tangelder, is designed to provide an historical overview of the situation in Canada. It is not designed to be an evaluation of any particular denominational position. The second document is a short paper on the meaning of denominationalism. This is designed to put the debate about denominational positions in the context of real life in the 1990s in North America. The third document is a reflection on interdenominational schools by Ray Hendriks, principal of Rhema Christian School in Peterborough, Ontario. This document provides an excellent insight into how one particular school successfully negotiated the shoals and rocks of denominational loyalties, and managed to create a flourishing Christian school in a contested environment.

Dr. A. Guldemond Executive Director