



ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

COMMUNICATION, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTIONS (Policy Statement: Communication, Concerns and Complaint Resolutions)

Purpose

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board is committed to open communications with members of the public and its school communities. Parents, students, staff, volunteers and trustees have a right to receive public affirmation for their positive efforts and, likewise, the right to know when concerns arise, what the consequences are and who has raised them. All public and interpersonal communications must recognize the dignity of the individual and be conducted fairly, with respect and in compliance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. When concerns arise, they will be dealt with directly by the individuals involved in the situation.

References

Education Act and Regulations

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Procedures

1.0 Parent / Guardian Communication, Concerns and Complaint Resolution Process

- 1.1 When a parent/guardian has a concern or a complaint, it is expected that the concern or complaint will first be taken up with the individual with whom the parent/guardian has the concern or complaint.
- 1.2 The concern or complaint will not be considered unless the complainant has identified himself/herself by name.
- 1.3 If a parent/guardian has a concern or a complaint about a school or classroom matter, the following steps should be followed:

Step 1: The issue or concern is to be discussed with the classroom teacher.

Step 2: If the parent/guardian and the teacher are not able to resolve the issue, it will be discussed with the school Principal. The Principal will gather facts to clarify the problem and work to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Step 3: If the parent/guardian and the school Principal are not able to resolve the issue, contact is made with the school Superintendent. The Superintendent will review the matter as it relates to established policies and procedures and respond to the parent/guardian and Principal about the concern.

Step 4: If the parent/guardian and the Superintendent are not able to resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may request the matter be reviewed by the Director of Education. The Director of Education (or designate) will review the matter and communicate directly with the complainant or through the Superintendent.

1.4 The Role of the Principal:

The Principal may involve the staff member in any discussion with the parent/guardian. The Principal may request, at any step in the process that concerns be put in writing. The Principal may involve, at any time in the process, others who may be helpful in resolving the concern: supports from the school board, employee group representatives, the local parish and/or community agencies.

1.5 The Role of the Trustee:

A parent/guardian may contact any trustee at any time. The trustee will direct the parent/guardian to follow the process(es) outlined in these Administrative Procedures.

1.6 The Role of the School Council:

The School Council is not a forum to discuss parent-teacher-student issues. If these matters are brought to any School Council member or any School Council meeting, the concern is to be referred immediately to the Principal, who will ensure the proper process is followed.

1.7 For all other school related concerns that do not involve taking the matter up first with a staff member, the communication should be directed to the school Principal.

1.8 The Principal will ensure that the Communication, Concerns and Complaint Resolution Process (1.3) are published annually in the school newsletter, and note that they are available on the board's website. Principals will provide all staff with a copy of the Communication, Concerns and Complaint Process Procedures. Principals will also provide a copy of these procedures to their School Council and discuss its contents.

1.9 The effective use of these procedures by all concerned will result in the fair and quick resolution of concerns.

2.0 Communications to the Public by Board Staff

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board wishes to ensure that the news of the school system is publicly communicated through all available means, including direct correspondence to parents/guardians, notification to media, and postings on Board social media sites and the Board's website.

In order to assist this proactive, positive communication and to safeguard the public image of the school system, the following procedures shall be adhered to:

- 2.1 The Board recognizes the Chair of the Board or his/her designate as the official spokesperson on matters of Board policy.
- 2.2 In concert with Board policies and procedures regarding Board publications and Board information, the Director of Education will ensure that the news media is informed on a timely basis regarding matters of Board business.
- 2.3 Disclosure of information will not be made when such disclosure would:
 - (a) violate the privacy rights of trustees, staff, students or ratepayers under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and/or
 - (b) violate the confidentiality of Board matters considered during in-camera sessions, according to the Provisions of the *Education Act*.
 - (c) involve matters of discipline or performance issues related to staff.
- 2.4 Responsibility for coordinating general liaison with the news media will be delegated to the Communications Officer. Response to routine requests for information on matters of public interest such as appointments, programs, special events, meetings, honours and awards, etc. will be coordinated through the Communications Officer. Information requests of a specialized or detailed nature will be referred for comment to the Director of Education or designate.
- 2.5 Media requests for access to schools and/or students will be directed to the Communications Officer and may be granted in consultation with the Director's Office and the Principal, if deemed to be in the best interests of the students and/or school community.
- 2.6 Requests for information made under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act will be subject to the policies and procedures of the Board established in respect of that legislation.

3.0 Trustee Communications

Trustees are partners in education. Consequently, communication with our Board of Trustees is encouraged. When contacted, the trustee will ensure that concerns are directed to the appropriate staff member as follows:

- 3.1 Trustees will communicate with the Director of Education and/or Chair of the Board who will communicate the information or concern to the appropriate staff person.

3.2 Resolution of the concern will be communicated by the Director of Education or the Chair of the Board to the person who voiced the concern or complaint.

4.0 Posting of Resolutions Process

The Board will post all steps to follow for the resolution of concerns and complaints to the Board's public website.

Appendices

Forms

Associated Documents

Approved: February 27, 2007

Revised: March 29, 2011

Reviewed: April 28, 2015

Revised: October 27, 2015