



Policy 2.40 Addressing Concerns and Complaints

The Board of Education welcomes comments, questions, concerns and complaints regarding the decisions made by the Board or its employees.

The Board believes that concerns and complaints should be dealt with in a manner that reflects mutual respect and at the point closest to where the concern first arises. Unresolved matters, where the decision significantly affects the education, health or safety of the student, may be appealed to the Board of Education utilizing the Board's Appeal Bylaw.

The Board also recognizes that concerns and complaints about employee decisions that do not significantly affect the education, health or safety of a student are within the final authority of the Superintendent.

The Board believes that staff should be protected from unnecessary, inappropriate, or malicious criticism. In the process of resolving a concern or complaint, hearsay and rumour will be discounted in favour of considering facts directly related to the matter.

The key principles for raising and addressing concerns or complaints include that:

- They are addressed as near the source as possible.
- They are made, and dealt with, in a courteous and constructive manner.
- Personnel against whom complaints are made have an opportunity to respond.
- They are handled in a timely, objective and fair manner.
- Persons who have brought forward concerns or complaints will be kept informed of the status of their inquiry in a timely manner.

This Policy is intended to articulate a fair, effective and transparent response for addressing concerns and complaints. The facts, issues and circumstances pertaining to concerns or complaints are unique to each and every case, therefore, this policy sets out processes for dealing with expressed concerns or complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness intended to support the parties to resolve matters in a positive manner.



Processes for Addressing Concerns or Complaints

1. No anonymous complaints shall be considered.
2. Persons receiving or hearing concerns or complaints should encourage the complainant to follow these processes.
3. Every effort should be made to resolve the matter at the earliest possible stage.
 - 3.1. Support staff are expected to take concerns to the staff member involved or to seek assistance from a Principal or supervisor.
 - 3.2. Teachers are expected to take concerns to the staff member involved consistent with the collective agreement and the BCTF Code of Ethics.
 - 3.3. Concerns regarding school level matters directed to District Office will be referred to the Principal who shall notify the appropriate staff member to address the concern.
 - 3.4. Concerns directed to a Parent Advisory Committee executive member shall be referred to the Principal.
 - 3.5. Concerns directed to a trustee shall be referred to the Superintendent.
4. Any individual expressing a concern or a complaint may choose to be accompanied to any meetings by an advocate of their choosing.
5. The District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) or the local school Parent Advisory Council (PAC) may be contacted for: advice regarding a support person or, as a resource to your particular need.
6. The sequential steps to addressing a concern or complaint at the school level are:
 - Step One:*

Take the matter directly to the teacher or staff person. Discuss your concern regarding the action, policy, procedure or practice.
 - Step Two:*

Arrange a meeting between yourself, the staff person and the Principal or Vice-Principal if *Step One* does not sufficiently address your concerns. This meeting should focus on the issue.



Step Three:

Arrange a meeting between yourself and the Principal or Vice-Principal if *Step Two* does not sufficiently address your concerns.

Step Four:

Arrange a meeting between yourself and the Associate Superintendent or designate if *Step Three* does not sufficiently address your concerns.

Step Five:

If the matter is not resolved subsequent to following these steps, the matter may be appealed to the Board. The Board Section 11 Appeal Procedures Bylaw contains all the details regarding filing such an appeal.

7. To address a concern or complaint at the district level:

Step One:

Take the matter directly to the person involved. Discuss your concern regarding the action, policy, procedure or practice.

Step Two:

Arrange a meeting with the Associate Superintendent, Director of Instruction or Secretary Treasurer if *Step One* does not sufficiently address your concerns.

Step Three:

If the matter is not resolved subsequent to following these steps, the matter may be appealed to the Board. The Board Section 11 Appeal Procedures Bylaw contains all the details regarding filing such an appeal.