

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

PURPOSE

The following procedure provides guidelines for the Rainy River District School Board to address concerns in a timely, respectful, and equitable manner.

RATIONALE

The Rainy River District School Board is committed to developing and maintaining open and positive relationships with parents/guardians, students, and the community.

GUIDELINES

1.0 School-Based Concerns

- 1.1 Individual questions, concerns, and complaints are resolved most effectively through direct communication with those closest to the point of concern, in a manner where respect and civility are maintained by all parties.
- 1.2 The Board must comply with all relevant legislation as it relates to privacy and confidentiality for all members of the school community.
- 1.3 Where a parent/guardian has a concern about their child's education, they shall address the concern with the child's teacher at a mutually convenient time.
 - If the parent/guardian and the teacher are not able to resolve the concern, the concern shall be discussed with the school principal or designate.
 - If the concern is still unresolved, the parent/guardian shall contact the school superintendent.
 - If the concern is not resolved at this level, then the parent/guardian shall contact the Director of Education.
- 1.4 School councils are advocates of the schools and advise principals on matters such student programming and school improvement efforts. School councils are not authorized to speak on behalf of the school or the RRDSB and will not act or advise on individual parent/guardian-teacher-student issues, and instead must refer these matters to the school principal.
- 1.5 Trustees are advocates for the system and of the process to resolve concerns. Parents/guardians may contact trustees at any time, and trustees will assist by directing the individual to the appropriate staff member and/or the appropriate process to resolve the concern.
- 1.6 The acknowledgement of a parent/guardian inquiry will occur within two school/business days, with messages initiated on weekends and evenings notes as received on the next school/business day.

- 1.7 From time to time, a parents/guardian may believe or feel that they need support in order that they can adequately address their child's interests and needs. This support may be necessary while a parent/guardian attends meetings with the Board staff. Parent/guardians have the right to have representation of their choosing when meeting with staff, subject to any limitations established in those procedures. Any costs/expenses incurred with such representation are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

If a parent/guardian chooses to bring representation to a meeting, they should ensure that the principal and/or staff members involved are notified in advance of the meeting.

A representative supporting a parent/guardian must agree, at the onset of or in advance of the meeting, to respect and maintain the confidentiality of the matter discussed at the meeting.

- 1.8 There are certain matters that staff are unable to discuss with parents/guardians, such as:

- Personal details or disciplinary measures concerning other students
- Personal details concerning staff or matters related to staff performance issues

2.0 Other Concerns Related to Students

- 2.1 Where a student's parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of a principal to suspend the student, that student's parent/guardian may appeal the principal's decision to suspend, in accordance with the *Human Rights Code*, the Board's Student Discipline Procedure, specifically, Suspension Appeal Guidelines.
- 2.2 Where a student, if 18 or older or if 16 or 17 and has been removed from parental control, disagrees with a principal's decision to suspend them, the student may appeal the principal's decision to suspend, in accordance with the *Human Rights Code*, the Board's Student Discipline Procedure, specifically, Suspension Appeal Guidelines.
- 2.3 Special Education programming appeals are to follow Ontario Regulation 181/98 in contacting the Special Education Tribunal.

3.0 Employee Concern Resolution Processes

- 3.1 Employees are encouraged to discuss any work-related concerns with their immediate supervisor (assistant manager/ manager, principal/vice principal). If this step does not resolve the concern, employees are encouraged to discuss the concern with the supervisory officer that oversees that department/school of the Board.
- 3.2 Unionized employees can access the grievance procedure for any concerns related to the application of the collective agreement, which includes working conditions, discipline, harassment, duty to accommodate, hiring processes, granting of leaves, etc.

4.0 Other Concerns and Questions

- 4.1 A concern regarding a physical plant (school/building) or a general health and safety concern should be addressed to the Manager of Plant Operations and Maintenance.

- 4.2 A concern regarding Board finances and/or Purchasing should be addressed to the Superintendent of Business.
- 4.3 A concern about the Board's information technology systems or services should be referred to the Manager of Information Technology Services.
- 4.4 Questions and concerns about bussing should be relayed to the Manager of the Rainy River District Transportation Consortium. If the question or concern is not resolved, then the person with the concern should contact the Superintendent of Business.
- 4.5 If the question or concern is not resolved at the Manager or Superintendent of Business level, then the concern may be escalated to the Director of Education.
- 4.6 Where a member of the public has a concern about a matter relating to the decisions of the Board of Trustees, the issue should be addressed with their local trustee. The local trustee may redirect the issue to the Director if the matter is operational. If the matter is under the purview of the Board, then the member of the public may choose to follow the delegation process.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Policies:

- 1.05 The Role of the Board
- 2.01 RRDSB Code of Conduct
- 2.07 Responding to Concerns
- 2.67 Equity & Inclusive Education
- 3.86 Employee Code of Conduct
- 4.16 Safe Schools
- 5.01 Special Education
- 7.75 Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention

Procedures:

- 2.68 Religious Accommodation
- 3.20 Inclement Weather - Staff
- 4.30 Student Discipline
- 5.35 Exemption from Instruction in Human Development & Sexual Health
- 7.75 Workplace Harassment
- 8.09 Procurement

Other:

- Rainy River District School Board of Trustees Procedural Bylaws

Legal/Ministry of Education

- *Education Act, Section 207(2)*
- *Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)*
- Ontario Student Record Guideline (OSR Guideline)

- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*
- *Employment Standards Act*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*
- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*
- *Shared Solutions*
- *Ontario Regulation 181/98*
- *Human Rights Code*