Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board

Section: Administration

Administrative Procedure: Pr A 07B: Channels of Communication

NUMBER:	Pr A:07B
EFFECTIVE:	Nov. 27, 2018
AMENDED:	Dec. 10, 2024
RELATED POLICIES:	See References
REPEALS:	
REVIEW DATE:	2029-2030

1.0 OBJECTIVE:

1.1 To establish clearly defined procedures for parents/guardians and stakeholders to follow when working towards mutually acceptable solutions to school and student-based concerns that may arise, ensuring they are consistent with the *Education Act* and relevant board policies as referenced in Policy A:07 Communications, while maintaining a learning environment to improve achievement and well-being of all students.

2.0 GUIDELINES:

2.1 Ensure all communications are conducted in a manner which promotes respect, civility and trust and focuses on working towards mutually acceptable solutions.

2.2 Ensure that every parent/guardian with a concern has an adequate opportunity to fully express the concern.

2.3 Encourage the parent/guardian to address the concern at the level at which it originates.

2.4 In addressing a concern, respond in a manner consistent with the principles of procedural fairness.

2.5 Maintain a written record of the concern and response, where appropriate.

2.6 Provide the parent/guardian/stakeholder with timely updates, as needed, about the progress made in resolving the concern.

2.7 Ensure that confidentiality, in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protected Privacy Act* (MFIPPA), is maintained by all parties regarding student and personnel matters.

3.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES:

All Members of the School Community are to conduct themselves in a manner which promotes respect, civility and trust and focuses on working towards mutually acceptable solutions.

3.1 Principals shall communicate the board's Channels of Communications Procedure to school communities and to stakeholders at the beginning of the school year.

3.2 The WECDSB will ensure that a parent inquiry will be acknowledged within two business days, and will make best efforts to provide an estimated date of response if a parent inquiry cannot be fully addressed within five business days of receipt.

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS:

Parent/Guardian Protocol:

3.3 Concerns related to classroom matters; parents/guardians shall be encouraged to communicate directly with the **Teacher**. The Principal should intervene when there is an impasse and mediation is needed to move dialogue forward in a positive manner.

3.4 If the parent/guardian has not been successful in resolving the classroom concern with the teacher, the parent/guardian will address the concern with the Principal.

3.5 Parent/guardian shall communicate with the Principal in matters pertaining to facilities, school operations, school policies and procedures.

3.6 Once the concern is presented to appropriate staff, parent/guardian should allow the opportunity for due consideration of the concern; however, the board will make best efforts to provide an estimated date of response if a parent inquiry cannot be fully addressed within five business days of receipt.

3.7 If parent/guardian is unable to adequately resolve a concern with the Principal, they may contact the Superintendent of the school.

Teacher Protocol

3.8 In addressing parent/guardian concerns, whenever possible the Teacher is to resolve the concerns at the source.

3.9 Teachers shall be expected to respond to parent/guardian concerns within two business days, and will share information regarding a student's progress or concerns openly with the parent/guardian.

3.10 Teachers shall communicate directly with the Principal regarding classroom matters of concern, or areas pertaining to implementing system/school policies or procedures. When there is an impasse and mediation is needed, the Superintendent becomes involved.

3.11 Teachers shall not deal directly with the Superintendent regarding school related concerns but should go through their respective Principal.

Principal Protocol:

3.12 The Principal will advise the parent/guardian to discuss the concern directly with the staff member and, if possible, resolve it at that level.

3.13 The Principal will discuss the concern with the staff member; consider the staff member's and parent/guardian's perspective.

3.14 The Principal, if necessary, meet with staff member and parent/guardian to discuss the concern to work towards a resolution.

3.15 The Principal shall refer the concern to the Superintendent if the parent/guardian wishes to appeal the decision of the Principal.

3.16 Principals should not deal directly with teachers from another school but should go through the Principal of the specific school from where the concern originated.

3.17 The Principal shall communicate any stakeholder concerns with the Superintendent.

Superintendent Protocol:

3.18 The Superintendent will refer the parent/guardian to the Principal where prior discussion with the Principal has not taken place and follow up with the Principal.

3.19 The Superintendent will consult with the Principal about the concern and advise the Principal of options to consider, or make a recommendation to the Principal for addressing the concern. Either the Principal or Superintendent will communicate the resolution with the parent/guardian.

3.20 Where the Superintendent determines that the concern about a particular school or community of schools requires informing and consulting with the Director (or designate), or other appropriate central staff, the Superintendent will initiate such communication with those parties.

3.21 If the concern is brought forward by a Trustee, via the Director's Office, the Superintendent, in consultation with the Director, will update the Trustee.

Director's Protocol:

3.22 The Director is responsible for defining lines of communication and shall communicate areas of concern with the Board members, where applicable.

3.23 The Director shall only intervene in school situations that have gone through all of the proper channels of communication and have not been resolved by the Superintendent. In those situations, the Director shall support the Superintendent by offering guidance, and may solicit advice from the Senior Administrative team.

3.24 When informed of a parent/guardian/stakeholder concern by a Trustee, the Director will communicate that concern to the appropriate Superintendent who will contact the Principal or Senior Administrator for further information. The Director's Office will follow up with the Trustee.

3.25 The Director (or designate) will communicate with the Trustee and other concerned parties in a timely manner regarding the resolution/decision about the concern raised and/or information that may impact their school community.

Trustees' Protocol:

3.26 When contacted by parent/guardian or constituents regarding a concern in one of their schools, the Trustee shall ascertain whether parent/guardian have first contacted the Teacher, the Principal and the Superintendent. If the parent/guardian's concern has not been resolved at the school or Superintendent level, the Trustee shall contact the Director's Office who will communicate the information to the appropriate staff for further investigation and resolution.

3.27 If the concern involves a personnel matter, the Trustee shall inform the Director's Office about the inquiry. If informed of the concern by a third party, inform the party that the concern has been shared with the Director's Office for investigation and resolution.

3.28 The Trustee shall share information which is pertinent to the resolution of parent/guardian concerns with the Director's Office who will convey the information to the appropriate Superintendent who, if needed, will assist the Principal to resolve the concern.

3.29 Trustee inquiries, information or suggestions about possible resolutions to a school concern are to be communicated to the Director's Office who will forward the information to the appropriate staff.

3.30 The Director (or designate), in consultation with the Communication Coordinator, when necessary, will assist the Trustee in communicating with the affected parties.

3.31 A concern regarding school facilities will be directed to the Director's Office, who will communicate with the Senior Administrator of Facilities Services.

3.32 The Director will ensure that exemplary policies and practices are established and that, through the Director of Education, all WECDSB employees are held accountable for responding to parent/guardian/stakeholder concerns.

Catholic School Advisory Council, Parent Involvement Committee, and all Advisory Committees Protocol:

3.33 Catholic School Advisory Councils (CSAC), the Parent Involvement Committee, and all Advisory Committees should be aware of the channels of communication protocols and shall encourage parent/guardians in their school community to make themselves aware of those protocols.

3.34 Catholic School Advisory Councils, the Parent Involvement Committee, and all Advisory Committees act as advisory bodies and members shall not be allowed to discuss specific parents, students, school/Board Trustees, personnel or other Council members.

3.35 Any concerns brought to a CSAC, Parent Involvement and/or any Advisory Committee member's attention regarding, but not limited to, students, staff, programming, or facilities should be communicated directly with the Principal, then to the Superintendent, before corresponding with their Ward/Area Trustee.