CONCERNS and COMPLAINTS

Belief

A concerns and complaints resolution process is good for interpersonal relations and good for the school division.

Guidelines

1. From time to time concerns or complaints may arise regarding the operation of schools or the Division. Such matters should be resolved in a candid, cooperative and timely manner, as close to the source of the concern or complaint as is possible, and in a manner that is fair to students, parents, community members, and Division staff.

2. The Division believes that employees, bus drivers and bus contractors should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and resolve the matter prior to the involvement of a supervisor.

3. So that the public may be informed on how to properly communicate their concerns or complaints, the Division advises that such matters shall be dealt with in the order set out below:

   3.1 Instruction and Discipline
      3.1.1 Teacher
      3.1.2 Principal
      3.1.3 Superintendent, or designate
   3.2 School or Division Personnel
      3.2.1 Employee
      3.2.2 Employee’s immediate supervisor
      3.2.3 Superintendent, or designate
   3.3 Transportation
      3.3.1 Bus operator
      3.3.2 Bus contractor
      3.3.3 Transportation Manager
      3.3.4 Superintendent, or designate
   3.4 Board Operations, Policies or Administrative Procedures
      3.4.1 Superintendent, or designate
      3.4.2 Board

4. A Concerns and Complaints Form 416-1 is available for the use of those expressing a concern or complaint, if they so wish.

5. This administrative procedure does not apply to requests for information or other matters specifically dealt with in other administrative procedures such as student suspension and expulsion.
6. When a parent, student or member of the community expresses a concern or complaint, Division staff, bus drivers and bus contractors must:

6.1 receive the concern or complaint courteously;
6.2 address the matter in a timely manner;
6.3 if the concern or complaint relates to another person, when appropriate, consult with that person;
6.4 address the concern or complaint in a candid, cooperative and respectful manner by inquiring into the nature and extent of the concern or complaint;
6.5 determine whether the concern or complaint relates to the operation of the school and/or the school division;
6.6 if appropriate redirect the concern or complaint to the appropriate person;
6.7 keep a record of communication about the matter;
6.8 if appropriate provide the person who has raised the concern or complaint with information about this administrative procedure;
6.9 meet or communicate with the person who has raised the concern or complaint to discuss the matter, the results of the inquiry, the decision or determination, and the reasons for the determination or decision;
6.10 if appropriate, inform the person who raised the concern or complaint about the sequence for resolving the matter; and
6.11 inform the appropriate staff member of the decision.

6. A checklist form for addressing a concern or complaint is to be used by Division staff, bus operators and bus contractors: Form 416-2 Checklist for Concerns and Complaints.

7. The Division expects employees, bus operators and bus contractors to utilize their conflict resolution skills to resolve the matter with the complainant.

8. A concern or complaint shall be made at an appropriate time and place, and in a respectful manner.

9. Concerns or complaints shall be made in private and not in front of students, during class time, or in front of other employees except, where necessary, the employee’s or bus operator’s supervisor.

10. A concern or complaint must be handled in a confidential manner, in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

11. In order to resolve the concern or complaint in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the information about the concern or complaint and the identity of the person lodging the concern or complaint must be disclosed to:

11.1 the person or persons named in the concern or complaint,
11.2 those persons who need to be contacted for information about the concern or complaint, or
11.3 those persons who need to know about the concern or complaint as part of their duties, or
11.4 those persons who will be responding to the concern or complaint.
12. Where the complaint has not been resolved at the initial point in the sequence outlined above, the complainant may refer the matter to the supervisor who shall review the matter.

13. Where the complainant refuses to meet with the employee, bus operator or contractor who is the object of a concern or complaint to work to resolve the matter, the supervisor shall, when appropriate, ensure that the employee, bus operator or bus contractor is informed of the concern or complaint, and afforded the opportunity to present the facts as the employee, bus operator, or bus contractor sees them.

14. Complaints referred to the Superintendent shall be made in writing.

15. No action will be taken on anonymous concerns or complaints.

Reference:  Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Form 416-1: Concerns and Complaints
Form 416-2: Checklist for Concerns and Complaints