



**Context:**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (2019) is intended to encourage transparency, accountability and ethical decision making within the public service and school districts. It outlines a process for making and responding to a serious or systemic issue of wrongdoing.

**Policy Statement:**

School District 69 strongly supports transparency, accountability and ethical decision making through the organization. The Board actively promote a culture of openness and encourages employees (current or former) to report any wrongdoing.

**Guiding Principles:**

1. The Board believes that ethical decision making should be at the core of all Board processes.
2. The Board values transparency and accountability in all areas of governance, management and leadership.
3. The Board believes that all employees have a right to report any perceived wrongdoing, and that those reports respect the anonymity and well-being of anyone who so reports.
4. The Board supports a full array of processes and mechanisms which address and enforce standards of conduct, disputes, complaints, or grievances, and sees safety for those who report wrongdoing as being ancillary to those processes.

**Definitions:**

Public Interest Disclosure Act 2019 (PIDA) – Intended to be “whistleblower” protection which allows current and former employees to raise serious or systemic issues of wrongdoing for investigation without exposing those employees to any risk of retaliation.

**References/Resources:**

- [Administrative Procedures to Board Policy 305: Public Interest Disclosure](#)
- [Board Policy 710: Resolution of Student and Parent/Caregiver Complaints](#)
- The *Public Interest Disclosure Act*: [Public Interest Disclosure Act \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: [Public Interest Disclosure Resources](#)
- FAQs — *Public Interest Disclosure Act*: Disclosures and Reprisal Complaints to the Ombudsperson: [PIDA-FAQs.pdf \(bcombudsperson.ca\)](#)
- [The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: Resources for Chief Executives; Checklist for Chief Executives](#)
- [The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: Resources for Designated Officers; Designated Officer Responsibilities Under PIDA](#)
- [The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: Resources for Supervisors](#)
- [The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: Resources for Employees](#)

**Dates of Adoption/Amendments:**

Adopted: **2021.10.26**

Amended:



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE TO BOARD POLICY 305

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

**Purpose:**

These Administrative Procedures are intended to support Board Policy 305 - *Public Interest Disclosure*. Use of these procedures should provide employees with the assurance that there are confidential processes that encourage reports of wrongdoing and that protect the reporter from reprisals, consequence or retribution.

**Guidelines for Reporting:**

1. This Policy applies to alleged wrongdoing related to the School District's operations or personnel. This Policy does not displace other mechanisms set out in School District Policy for addressing and enforcing standards of conduct, disputes, complaints, or grievances, including issues of discrimination, bullying and harassment, occupational health and safety, or disputes over employment matters or under collective agreements.
2. The types of wrongdoing ("Wrongdoing") about which employees can complain include:
  - a) a serious act or omission that, if proven, would breach any laws of British Columbia or Canada;
  - b) an act or omission that creates a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons, or to the environment (other than a danger that is inherent in the performance of an employee's duties or functions);
  - c) a serious misuse of public funds or public assets;
  - d) gross or systemic mismanagement;
  - e) knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing described in paragraphs (a) to (d).
3. Reports made under this policy and using these procedures will be done so with confidentiality in order to protect the well-being of the reporting employee.
4. The School District will investigate disclosures that it receives under this Policy. Investigations under this Policy will be carried out in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
5. Most reports will be made to a supervisor or the designated officer at the district.
6. Reports may also be made to the Ombudsperson.
7. Reports can be made anonymously, but the school district may not be obliged to investigate an anonymous report made under the Act unless the report provides sufficient detail to conduct a fair investigation.
8. Any trustee may report wrongdoing if the incident occurred while the trustee was holding office.
9. The district will not tolerate reprisals, consequences or retribution against anyone reporting in good faith under this policy.

**Procedures:**

1. The Superintendent of Schools or designate will ensure that all employees are reminded of this policy and its attendance procedures on an annual basis.
2. Supervisors of work sites and Principals of schools and programs will ensure that all staff that they supervise are reminded of this policy and its attendant procedures on an annual basis.
3. The Superintendent of Schools or designate will ensure that mechanisms are in place for employees to report wrongdoing in a confidential and, if it is the wish of the reporter,



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- anonymous manner, recognizing that anonymous concerns may not be followed up on if there is insufficient detail to proceed.
4. One key element of administering this policy and its procedures is ensuring that anyone reporting wrongdoing is doing so in accordance with relevant other policies and procedures as possible, including use of Policy 710: *Resolution of Student and Parent/Caregiver Complaints* and any pertinent clauses in collective agreements or employment contracts.

**References/Resources:**

- Board Policy 305: [Public Interest Disclosure](#)
- Board Policy 710: [Resolution of Student and Parent/Caregiver Complaints](#)
- The *Public Interest Disclosure Act*: [Public Interest Disclosure Act \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: [Public Interest Disclosure Resources](#)
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