



**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:**

Qualicum School District 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 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:



**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, 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 Complaints* and any pertinent clauses in collective agreements or employment contracts.

**References/Resources:**

- [Board Policy 305: Public Interest Disclosure](#)
- [Board Policy 710: Resolution of Complaints](#)
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- The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: [Public Interest Disclosure Resources](#)
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- [The Ombudsperson of British Columbia: Resources for Employees](#)

**Dates of Adoption/Amendments:**

Adopted: 2021.10.26  
Amended: 2024.11.26 (Form added)



## QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT

### APPENDIX 1

## PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM

### INSTRUCTIONS

Before filling out the Public Interest Disclosure Form, please review Board Policy 305: Public Interest Disclosure and its Administrative Procedures. Please also ensure that you provide all required details and attach copies of any documents you wish to submit as part of your report. The completed form (together with all attachments) may be submitted by mail or email to the School Board Chair, Superintendent of Schools, or Secretary Treasurer.

### PRIVACY STATEMENT

The personal information submitted in this Public Interest Disclosure Form is collected by the School District under sections 26(a) and (c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and will be used to assess, review, investigate and respond to allegations of wrongdoing made under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. If you have any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of your personal information in connection with your disclosure, please contact the Secretary Treasurer.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Reports made under the Public Interest Disclosure Act are received and held in confidence by the School District. The reports and information received will be used and shared only to the extent reasonable and necessary to assess, investigate and respond to your disclosure and will not be used or disclosed for other purposes except as permitted or required under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Public Interest Disclosure Act or other applicable laws.

### COMPLETING THE DISCLOSURE FORM

The purpose of this Public Interest Disclosure Form is to assist you in making a disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. The requested information is to ensure we have sufficient information to carefully review, investigate and respond to your disclosure. If you are unable to provide all requested details at the time you make your initial disclosure, you may ask to submit additional details at a later time.



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## APPENDIX 1

### PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM

#### DISCLOSURE REPORT

1. Are you a current employee of the School District?  
 Yes     No
2. Were you an employee of the School District when the alleged wrongdoing occurred or was discovered?  
 Yes     No
3. Please enter your contact information below so that we can communicate with you about your disclosure. Your identity and contact information may be shared with investigators to allow them to communicate with you.

While anonymous disclosures may be accepted under the Public Interest Disclosure Act, we may not be able to investigate if we are unable to contact you to confirm you are a current or former employee or to obtain further details, evidence or clarification about your disclosure.

NAME:	ADDRESS:
EMAIL:	PHONE:
ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS: (e.g. How would you prefer to be contacted? May we leave messages for you?)	

4. A report may be made under the Public Interest Disclosure Act for any of the following categories of wrongdoing. Please check any that apply:
  - serious act or omission that, if proven, would constitute an offence under an enactment of British Columbia or Canada;
  - 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;
  - a serious misuse of public funds or public assets;
  - gross or systemic mismanagement;
  - knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing described above.

If your report does not fall within one of these categories, you may wish to consider whether your report falls under another policy or procedure of the School District [Policies](#).



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5. In the space below, please describe the alleged wrongdoing and the person(s) alleged to have committed the wrongdoing. Please provide as much detail as you are able, including:
- A description of the wrongdoing and any relevant background;
  - The names of those responsible;
  - When and where the wrongdoing occurred;
  - Names of people who witnessed the wrongdoing, if available, and/or;
  - Any law or legislation that has been breached.

DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGED WRONGDOING:

6. Have you previously reported the wrongdoing to the School District?  Yes  No  
If 'Yes', please indicate who the report was made to and any actions taken.

REPORT DATE AND PERSON REPORTED TO:

7. Please describe any other steps or action that you or others have taken to address, report or prevent the reported wrongdoing.

OTHER STEPS OR ACTION TAKEN:

8. Do you know of any other organizations that are investigating the reported wrongdoing or whether other complaints or claims about the wrongdoing have been filed (e.g. court filings, grievance, human rights complaint, privacy complaint, police investigation, etc.). Please explain.

OTHER INVESTIGATIONS: