



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

Page 1 of 4

1. **Purpose**

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring that concerns and complaints from students and parents/caregivers are handled fairly, respectfully, and in a timely manner. This policy establishes the principles guiding how concerns are addressed at the school and district level and outlines the appropriate pathways for resolution.

The goal is to resolve issues as close to the source as possible, through constructive dialogue, restorative approaches when appropriate, and clear, transparent processes.

2. **Guiding Principles**

a. **Respect and Dignity**

All individuals—students, families, and staff—must be treated respectfully and with sensitivity throughout the complaint process.

b. **Resolution at the Lowest Level**

Concerns should be addressed first with the person or school directly involved, unless safety concerns prevent this.

c. **Fairness and Impartiality**

Complaints must be considered objectively, without bias, and with attention to all relevant information.

d. **Timeliness and Clarity**

Issues must be addressed as promptly as reasonable, with clear communication about next steps.

e. **Right to Be Heard**

Students and parents/caregivers have the right to share their concerns and receive a considered response.

f. **Supportive and Restorative**

Where possible, conflict resolution should promote learning, understanding, and restoration of relationships.

g. **Protection from Retaliation**

Individuals raising concerns in good faith must be free from reprisal, intimidation, or adverse treatment.

h. **Confidentiality**

Personal information must be treated with discretion and shared only as needed to resolve the concern.

i. **Alignment with Legislation and District Policy**

Complaint processes must follow the School Act, Human Rights Code, FOIPPA, and district policies.

3. **Scope of This Policy**

This policy applies to:

a. concerns or complaints raised by students or parents/caregivers regarding school or district practices;

b. matters that can be resolved through administrative or educational decision-making processes.



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

This policy does not apply to:

- a. matters governed by formal appeal processes under Section 11 of the School Act (see Board Bylaw 5: *Student and/or Parent/Caregiver Appeals to the Board of Education*);
- b. allegations of child abuse or neglect (Policy 706);
- c. allegations of staff misconduct subject to confidential HR processes;
- d. issues covered under collective agreements;
- e. bullying or harassment complaints involving staff (Policy 604 / 606);
- f. Freedom of Information requests or privacy breaches (Policy 900).

Where a complaint better fits another district or provincial process, staff will redirect the complainant appropriately.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Students and Parents/Caregivers

Students and parents/caregivers are encouraged to:

- a. Raise concerns respectfully and promptly;
- b. Begin at the school level with the staff member most directly involved;
- c. Provide information needed to understand and resolve the concern;
- d. Engage in good-faith dialogue aimed at resolution.

4.2 Staff and Principals

Staff must:

- a. Listen respectfully and respond constructively;
- b. Work collaboratively to resolve concerns at the earliest stage;
- c. Elevate concerns to the principal when they cannot resolve them directly.

Principals must:

- a. Review and respond to concerns brought to their attention;
- b. Communicate school-based decisions clearly;
- c. Determine when issues must be forwarded to district leadership.

Principals also ensure students and families understand the pathways available to them.

4.3 Superintendent

The Superintendent is responsible for:

- a. Reviewing concerns that remain unresolved at the school level;
- b. Ensuring policies and procedures are applied fairly and consistently;
- c. Making or affirming administrative decisions where required;
- d. Supporting restorative or mediated processes when appropriate;
- e. Ensuring that complaint processes remain accessible, culturally safe, and respectful.

4.4 Board of Education

The Board does not participate in the resolution of individual complaints unless the matter qualifies for a formal appeal under Section 11 of the School Act and the complainant initiates that appeal according to Board policy and procedures.

The Board's role is governance—not operational dispute resolution.



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

Page 3 of 4

5. Resolution Pathway (Governance-Level Outline)

a. Direct Discussion

Student or parent/caregiver meets with the staff member involved.
(Unless doing so is unsafe or inappropriate.)

b. School-Level Review

If unresolved, the concern is brought to the principal for review and response.

c. District-Level Review

If still unresolved, the concern may be forwarded to the Superintendent or designate.

d. Formal Appeal Process (Section 11)

If the concern meets the criteria of a decision that significantly affects a student's education, health, or safety, the complainant may file an appeal to the Board under Policy 005.

Administrative Procedures will provide detailed steps, forms, and timelines.

6. Protection from Retaliation

The district will not tolerate reprisal against anyone who raises a concern or participates in the resolution process in good faith.

Any form of intimidation, discrimination, or retaliation will be addressed through appropriate administrative or HR processes.

7. Confidentiality

All conversations and documentation related to complaints will be treated confidentially, consistent with FOIPPA.

Information will be shared only with individuals who need it to facilitate fair and timely resolution.

8. Administrative Procedures

The Superintendent will establish procedures that:

- a. Provide detailed steps, timelines, and forms for complaint resolution;
- b. Define expectations for communication and documentation;
- c. Protect privacy and cultural safety;
- d. Support restorative approaches where appropriate;
- e. Clarify escalation pathways, including Section 11 appeals;
- f. Ensure consistency across schools.



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

9. Internal References

- [Board Bylaw 5 — Student and/or Parent/Caregiver Appeals to the Board of Education](#)
- [Policy 700 — Safe, Caring, and Inclusive School Communities](#)
- [Policy 701 — Student Discipline](#)
- [Policy 706 — Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
- [Administrative Procedures for complaint resolution and appeals](#)

External References

- [School Act, Section 11 \(Appeals\)](#)
- [FOIPPA](#)
- [BC Human Rights Code](#)

Dates of Adoption/Amendments:

Adopted: 1989.10.15

Amended: 1991.09.10 | 2001.04.24 | 2002.10.22 | 2003.05.27 | 2009.04.28 | 2016.03.08 |
2021.11.23 | **2026.02.24**



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

Page 1 of 5

1. Purpose

This Administrative Procedure supports Policy 710 – *Resolution of Student and Parent/Caregiver Complaints* by establishing a fair, timely, and transparent process for addressing concerns raised by students and parents/caregivers. The district is committed to resolving concerns at the lowest appropriate level, while ensuring procedural fairness, respectful communication, and clear pathways for escalation when needed.

This Administrative Procedure does not replace processes required under collective agreements, child protection legislation, WorkSafeBC regulations, or human rights law.

2. Guiding Principles

- a. Concerns should be addressed as early as possible.
- b. Problems are best resolved closest to the source.
- c. All parties must be treated with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- d. Students and families must be able to raise concerns without fear of reprisal.
- e. Responses must be timely, transparent, and well documented.
- f. Students' privacy, identity, and cultural context must be protected.
- g. Complex complaints may require district-level involvement for resolution.
- h. Appeals must comply with provincial legislation and Board Bylaw 5: *Student and/or Parent/Caregiver Appeals to the Board of Education*

3. Scope

This procedure applies to concerns regarding:

- a. student learning, programming, or supports;
- b. interpersonal conflicts at school;
- c. supervision or conduct concerns;
- d. school-level decisions affecting a student;
- e. communication between home and school.

This AP does **not** apply to:

- a. allegations of child abuse or neglect (see AP 706-1);
- b. bullying or harassment (AP 700-1 / AP 604-1);
- c. discrimination (handled under Human Rights Code processes);
- d. staff discipline or personnel matters (handled by HR);
- e. formal appeals under the School Act (handled under Policy 0005).

4. Communication Expectations

All participants are expected to:

- a. communicate respectfully;
- b. focus on solutions;
- c. maintain confidentiality;
- d. avoid public criticism through social media or online forums;
- e. allow reasonable time for schools to investigate and respond.



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

5. Multi-Stage Complaint Resolution Process

The district follows a three-stage process, with escalation only when earlier steps have been exhausted or are inappropriate due to safety, privacy, or conflict of interest.

Stage 1: Direct Resolution at the School Level

5.1 Who to Contact

Parents/caregivers or students should first contact:

- a. the classroom teacher (for classroom-level concerns), or
- b. the staff member closest to the situation.

5.2 Teacher/Staff Responsibilities

- a. The staff member will:
- b. listen openly;
- c. gather information;
- d. clarify expectations;
- e. attempt to resolve the concern collaboratively;
- f. document steps taken when needed.

5.3 Timelines

Staff should respond within 2–3 school days.

Concerns should be addressed fully within 10 school days, whenever possible.

If the concern is not resolved, or the matter is inappropriate for Stage 1, proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Principal or Vice-Principal Review

5.4 Referral to School Administration

If the concern persists, the parent/caregiver or student contacts the Principal, who will:

- a. acknowledge receipt within **2 school days**;
- b. gather information from all parties;
- c. review documentation from Stage 1;
- d. communicate next steps;
- e. maintain neutrality and procedural fairness.

5.5 Principal's Decision

The Principal may:

- a. facilitate a meeting between parties;
- b. clarify expectations or communication plans;
- c. adjust programming or supports where appropriate;
- d. implement school-based interventions;
- e. conclude that the matter is resolved;
- f. provide a written summary of the decision (upon request).

5.6 Timelines

A school-level decision should normally be reached within:

- a. **10–15 school days**, depending on complexity.

If the concern is still unresolved, families may proceed to **Stage 3**.



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

Page 3 of 5

Stage 3: District-Level Review

5.7 Requesting a Review

Families may request a district review when:

- a. Stage 1 and 2 processes have been completed, or
- b. Stage 2 was not appropriate due to safety, conflict of interest, or allegations regarding the Principal.

Requests must be made **in writing** to the Superintendent or designate and include:

- a. student name and school;
- b. summary of the concern;
- c. steps taken to resolve the issue;
- d. desired outcome.

5.8 District Responsibilities

The Superintendent/designee will:

- a. acknowledge receipt within **3 school days**;
- b. review school-level decisions and documentation;
- c. speak with involved staff and families;
- d. determine whether policies and procedures were followed;
- e. decide on next steps or remedies;
- f. provide a written response.

5.9 Timelines

District review will typically be completed within:

- a. **15 school days**, or
- b. longer if complexity requires further investigation.

6. Appeal Under the School Act

If the family is not satisfied after Stage 3, they may submit a formal appeal under: Policy 0005 – Student and/or Parent/Caregiver Appeals to the Board of Education Appeals must relate to a decision that significantly affects the education, health, or safety of the student.

The Board's decision is final at the district level.

7. Special Circumstances Allowing Direct District Involvement

Families may bypass earlier stages when concerns involve:

- a. allegations of abuse, discrimination, or harassment by staff;
- b. safety threats;
- c. privacy breaches;
- d. conflicts of interest;
- e. a complaint specifically about the Principal.

In these cases, families may contact the Superintendent directly.



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

Page 4 of 5

8. Anti-Retaliation Protections

Students or families must **not** experience retaliation for raising a concern.

Principals must monitor for:

- a. exclusion from school activities;
- b. decreased access to supports;
- c. negative treatment linked to the complaint.

Any form of reprisal is treated as misconduct.

9. Documentation and Record Keeping

Schools and district leadership must document:

- b. summaries of meetings;
- c. information reviewed;
- d. actions taken;
- e. final outcomes.

Records are kept:

- a. confidentially;
- b. separately from the student's cumulative file;
- c. in accordance with FOIPPA and district retention schedules.

10. Support for Families and Students

Schools may offer:

- a. translation or interpretation services;
- b. Indigenous advocacy support;
- c. help accessing outside agencies;
- d. additional communication pathways (email, phone, in-person);
- e. support persons during meetings when requested.

11. Review Cycle

This Administrative Procedure will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if provincial appeal requirements change.

12. Internal References

- [Board Bylaw 5 — Student and/or Parent/Caregiver Appeals to the Board of Education](#)
- [Policy 700 — Safe, Caring, and Inclusive School Communities](#)
- [Policy 701 — Student Discipline](#)
- [Policy 706 — Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
- [Administrative Procedures for complaint resolution and appeals](#)

External References

- [School Act, Section 11 \(Appeals\)](#)
- [FOIPPA](#)
- [BC Human Rights Code](#)



QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 710-1

RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS

(Student Services Series)

Page 5 of 5

Dates of Adoption/Amendments:

Adopted: 1989.10.15

Amended: 1991.09.10 | 2001.04.24 | 2002.10.22 | 2003.05.27 | 2009.04.28 | 2016.03.08 |
2021.11.23 | **2026.02.24**



Family Guide: Addressing Concerns in the Qualicum School District

Start Here

TEACHER

HAVE QUESTIONS?
Your PAC & DPAC are here to help.

1

- Start by talking with your child's teacher.
- Provide dates, details, how it's affecting your child, and what you feel might help.
- Most of the time, this is the only step needed. The majority of classroom, supervision, program, or evaluation situations can be worked out with your child's teacher.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

- If you aren't satisfied with the outcome, reach out to the school principal or vice-principal.
- Ask for a meeting and share the details, including what's already been tried.
- Afterward, send a quick note to confirm what was decided and the next steps.

It can be helpful to bring a **SUPPORT PERSON** to meetings to observe and take notes.*

*This can be a PAC or DPAC representative.

2

Staff contact information is on the school & district websites.

DISTRICT STAFF

- If you aren't satisfied with the outcome, you can bring it to the Superintendent. They may ask a senior staff member to help.
- Ask for a meeting and explain the issue, the timeline, and what's already been tried.
- Request that the decisions and next steps be shared with you in writing.

3

4

BOARD OF EDUCATION

- If you aren't satisfied with the outcome after district staff review, you can make a formal appeal to the Board of Education.
- Fill out the Notice of Complaint Form (p. 8), include your records, and explain what outcome you are asking for.

More information on appealing a decision is in the BC School Act, QSD Bylaw 5 & Policy 710

5

KEEP RECORDS of all meetings, key dates, outcomes and documents.

AFTER BOARD DECISION

- If you feel the process or outcome wasn't fair, you can reach out to provincial bodies for help, or choose to get legal advice.



Family Guide: Addressing Concerns in the Qualicum School District

THREAT TO SAFETY & CRIMINAL ACTIVITY - If your concern involves an immediate threat to safety, suspected criminal activity, or child protection concerns, it may be appropriate to contact the police. This includes situations such as physical assault, sexual harassment or assault, credible threats of violence, possession of weapons, or other illegal activity.

Parents/caregivers who are unsatisfied with the school and district conflict resolution and appeals process may have the ability to escalate their concern further to a provincial oversight body or may wish to seek legal advice.

BC Teachers Regulation Branch

- If you have concerns that a teacher has breached the professional standards for educators, you can submit a complaint to the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation after first trying to resolve the issue at the school and district level.
- For more information: www.gov.bc.ca

Provincial Superintendent of Appeals

- If an appeal to the board of education does not resolve your concerns, you may appeal to a superintendent of appeals.
- The provincial superintendent of appeals can review decisions within a limited scope of decisions in the school system.
- For more information: www.gov.bc.ca

BC Ombudsperson

- The BC Ombudsperson can review/investigate complaints about unfair or unreasonable treatment by public bodies, including schools.
- For more information: www.bcombudsperson.ca

BC Human Rights Tribunal

- The Human Rights Tribunal can review human rights-related complaints such as discrimination based on race, gender, disability, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and family status.
- Complaints must be filed within one year of the incident and can be filed in addition to completing the school district appeals process.
- For more information: www.bchrt.bc.ca

Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection (FOIPP)

- Under the *FOIPP Act*, you can request access to your or your child's personal information.
- To request personal information from the school district, contact our school district's privacy officer, who is the Secretary-Treasurer.
- If your request is unresolved, contact the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) of BC and request a review or file a complaint.
- For more information: www.oipc.bc.ca



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS FORM

Notice of Complaint

Name of Individual Raising the Concern: _____
(Please Print)

Phone # : _____

Email: _____

Date Submitted: _____

School or Work Site Where Concern Originated: _____

Others involved in this situation: _____

Please describe the situation/issue you are concerned about. Please be brief and factual; if you require assistance, please contact the DPAC president. Use the back side of this form if necessary and where appropriate, please name the persons involved in this issue.

In chronological sequence, please outline, in note form, the actions you have taken up to now in an attempt to resolve this problem.

Signature of Individual Raising Concern: _____

Date this form was completed: _____



RESOLUTION OF STUDENT AND PARENT/CAREGIVER COMPLAINTS FORM

For Facilitator Use Only - Process for Resolution of Concerns Form

Name of Facilitator: _____

Position: _____

Dates of Meetings/Contact:

Measures Undertaken to Resolve the Matter

Resolved

Decisions, Remedies and/or Outcomes:

Unresolved

Matter referred to:

Superintendent or Designate

Date: _____

Copies to:

- Superintendent
- Senior Staff the matter is referred to
- Supervisor's file
- Individual raising concern