



Policy: Public Concerns

		Policy Number:	400.10
Adopted:	January 26, 2016	Former Policy Number:	n/a
Revised:	n/a	Policy Category:	Operations
Subsequent Review Dates:	n/a	Pages:	1

Belief Statement:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board is guided by Catholic virtues. In particular, dealing with public concerns ought to be inspired by the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board believes that the process of public concerns is an opportunity to improve relationships with our parents, students and community. It is the practice of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board that public concerns and questions should be dealt with at the level closest to the issue.

Policy Statement:

It is the policy of the Board to encourage a strong relationship with parents, students and community. The Board is committed to addressing public concerns in a fair, respectful and effective manner. The Board shall establish a protocol for dealing with public concerns through an administrative procedure.

Glossary of Key Policy Terms:

Prudence

Knowing the right thing to do and choosing it in each situation.

Justice:

Our constant and permanent determination to seek the good of others.

Fortitude

The ability to choose what is right, even in the face of difficulty.

Temperance

The ability to have balance and self-control in the living out of one's life.

References

[Ombudsman Ontario](#)

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board *Growing in Virtue* document
http://www.bhncdsb.ca/sites/2015-16/files/resources/catholicity/Growing_in_Virtue_document_website.pdf

Bill 177 – Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act



Public Concerns AP 400.10

Procedure for: Parents/Guardians, Trustees, and All Employees
Submitted by: Chris N. Roehrig – Director of Education
Category: Operations

Adopted: January 26, 2016
Revised: N/A

Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to provide guidance regarding the process for handling concerns.

Responsibilities

Parents have a responsibility to follow the policy/administrative procedure of the Board in relation to conveying concerns. In particular parents and other stakeholders should deal with concerns at the closest level to the issue. Trustees and employees are responsible for following the policy and procedures for dealing with concerns raised by the public.

Procedures

1.0 Protocol

If a parent/guardian has a concern about a school matter, the following procedures for review of the issue are available to the parent/guardian:

Step 1: Review of the Issue with the Child's Teacher

The parent/guardian should review a concern or issue with the classroom teacher at a mutually convenient time.

Step 2: Review by the School Principal

If the parent/guardian and the teacher are not able to resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may request that the matter be reviewed by the school principal (or designate). The principal (or designate) will review the issues and work to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Step 3: Review by the Superintendent of Education

If the parent/guardian and the school principal are not able to resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may request that the matter be reviewed by the school's Superintendent of Education. The Superintendent will review the matter as it relates to established policies and procedures and will respond to the parent/guardian about his/her concern.

Step 4: Review by Director of Education

If the parent/guardian and the Superintendent are not able to resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may request the matter be reviewed by the Director of Education. The Director of Education (or designate) will review the matter and respond to the parent/guardian about the concerns.

2.0 Representatives of Parents/Guardians

From time to time the parent/guardian may believe or feel that they need to enlist the support of an advocate (e.g., social worker) in order that they can adequately address their child's interests. This support may be necessary while parents/guardians are attending meetings with the staff employed by the Board. In all instances where parents/guardians enlist the support of an advocate, they should notify the school/district contact at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. In all cases, school/board staff shall take appropriate steps to protect the privacy of the child/family.



- 2.1 Parents/guardians have the right to have a representative of their choosing in attendance at meetings with staff, subject to any limitations established in these procedures. Any costs/expenses associated with such a representative are the responsibility of the parents/guardians.
- 2.2 Principals, staff and parents/guardians will be notified in advance of a meeting as to who is anticipated to be in attendance.
- 2.3 A representative supporting the parents/guardians must agree, at the outset of or in advance of the meeting, to respect and maintain the confidentiality of any matter discussed at a meeting between parents/guardians and staff.

3.0 Matters That Should Not Be Discussed with Staff

Although the subject matter of meetings between parents/guardians and staff (including meetings at which a representative or a parent/guardian is present) may be fairly broad, these meetings will generally relate to the education of the parents'/guardians' students(s) at the school in question. However, there are certain matters that staff are unable to discuss with parents or guardians.

- 3.1 Such matters that cannot be discussed include, for example, personal details or disciplinary measures concerning other student(s), and personal details related to staff or performance issues related to staff.
- 3.2 In the event that discussion cannot be limited to the subject matter that led to the meeting (generally the education of the parents'/guardians' student(s) at the school in question), as necessary, staff will bring closure to any meeting which becomes a discussion of personal details concerning other students or personal details about staff or issues relating to staff performance.

4.0 Role of Trustees

Parents or guardians may contact trustees at any time. Trustees may act on constituent complaints to help find a resolution by working with appropriate staff (usually the Director of Education or designate).¹ Trustees concern themselves with the implementation of their Board Policies and Procedures as they relate to parent or ratepayer complaints. Trustees should facilitate the communication process between the parent/guardian and the appropriate staff and provide information and direction. Trustees should direct the parent or guardian to the process which should be followed in resolving any concerns or to the appropriate person or step in the process (dependent on the steps the parents/guardians have already undertaken to resolve the concerns at the time the trustee is contacted).

5.0 Role of School Councils

School Councils were established to advise Principals on matters such as the school curriculum and code of student behaviour. They are not forums to discuss individual parent/guardian-teacher-student issues. Any of these matters brought to a School Council member or any School Council meeting will be referred immediately to the Principal.

Definitions – N/A

References

[Ombudsman Ontario](#)

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board Virtues document

http://www.bhncdsb.ca/sites/2015-16/files/resources/catholicity/Growing_in_Virtue_document_website.pdf

The Education Act

¹ *Good Governance: A Guide for Trustees, School Boards, Directors of Education and Communities* – The Ontario Education Services Corporation (2014).