

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

TITLE: HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH US—GUIDELINES FOR RESOLVING PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS—FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

CATEGORY: EDUCATION

NUMBER: 1162

Circulating until June 2, 2026

I. Rationale

From time-to-time, concerns regarding decisions made by employees of the district may arise. Constructive dialogue can assist in improving the quality of the learning environment, and in meeting individual student needs more effectively. This communication protocol provides a framework for finding solutions to differences that arise between staff and students, and their parents/guardians throughout the school district. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process. If a student initiates the resolution process, an adult may be present at any stage of the process.

II. Shared Commitments for Respectful Communication

Parents and guardians are valued partners in learning, and the Sunshine Coast School District is committed to fostering respectful, collaborative relationships among students, parents/guardians, and staff. We believe that concerns are best resolved through communication grounded in belonging, integrity, equity, and learning, with a shared focus on student well-being. This approach strengthens relationships, supports respectful and effective resolution of concerns, and contributes to positive outcomes for all students.

- A. Students and their parents/guardians can expect that staff will:
 - 1. Listen carefully and respectfully
 - 2. Maintain confidentiality
 - 3. Approach concerns in alignment with district policies and procedures and attempt to find a resolution.

- B. In turn, all communication with school and district staff, whether in person, by phone, email, or online, is expected to:
 - 1. Use respectful language and tone.
 - 2. Focus on the specific concern and possible solutions.
 - 3. Follow the resolution process outlined in this regulation.
 - 4. Refrain from recording, visually or audibly, any student or staff member without their prior consent.
 - 5. Avoid personal attacks, discriminatory remarks, harassment, intimidation, threats, or repeated hostile correspondence.

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- C. If communication becomes disrespectful or unsafe, staff may:
1. End the interaction and continue the conversation at a later time.
 2. Require communication to occur in an alternative format, such as written or video conference.
 3. Direct all communication through a designated contact person to ensure safety for employees.
 4. Direct individuals to leave school property if behaviour disrupts the learning or working environment (See Regulation 3260 – Trespassing and Maintaining Order: [https://sd46.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/3260-Trespassing and Maintaining Order.pdf](https://sd46.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/3260-Trespassing_and_Maintaining_Order.pdf)).

These expectations are intended to ensure concerns can be addressed in a manner that protects students, parents/guardians, and staff.

III. Resolution Process Steps

Step 1—Try to resolve the issue at the source.

- A. Identify the specific problem (list specific examples that illustrate the problem).
- B. Make an appointment to see the person with whom you have a concern, one-on-one.
- C. Respectfully express your concern.
- D. Ensure mutual understanding of the concern.
- E. Together, explore solutions.
- F. Together, set up an action plan with times, dates and follow-up.
- G. If a resolution cannot be reached, inform the other party and move to step 2.

Step 2—Principals

- A. Make an appointment with the school principal.
- B. Identify the concern and establish what has been done to reach a solution.
- C. The principal will help explore further options to resolve the concern.
- D. Together, set up an action plan with times, dates and follow-up.
- E. If a resolution cannot be reached, move to the step 3.

Step 3—Senior Leadership Review

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- A. Contact the Assistant Superintendent’s Office to identify the concern and provide a written summary of the issue. This should occur as soon as possible after the decision at Step 2 and no later than 30 days once the principal has rendered their decision.
- B. The written documentation shall include an outline of the nature of the concern, and the steps taken to resolve the matter, directly with the employee(s) involved.
- C. Where appropriate a meeting may be arranged with the assistant superintendent or designate, who may elect to include others in the process, including employees and members of the Sunshine Coast School District administration.
- D. The disposition of the review shall be confirmed in writing.
- E. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, inform the assistant superintendent and contact the Office of the Superintendent.

Step 4—Superintendent’s Office

- A. The superintendent will review the file and consider whether the decisions made by employees are lawful, ethical, and in compliance with Board policies and the School Act.
- B. The disposition of the review shall be confirmed in writing, and the decision of the superintendent is final, except where the decision significantly affects the education, health, or safety of a student, as defined in Section 11 of the School Act (See https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96412_02).

Step 5—The Board of Education

- A. Appeals to the Board are limited to decisions that significantly affect the education, health, or safety of a student, as defined in Section 11 of the School Act.
- B. The complainant must meet with the superintendent before an appeal may be filed with the Board under Bylaw 70.
- C. To file an appeal with the Board of Education, please see the process outlined in Bylaw 70—Appeals (See https://sd46.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/70_appeals_bylaw.pdf).

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References:

- Section 11 School Act—
https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96412_02
- Appeals Bylaw 70: https://sd46.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/70_appeals_bylaw.pdf
- Regulation 3260 – Trespassing and Maintaining Order: https://sd46.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/3260-Trespassing_and_Maintaining_Order.pdf
- Regulation 2070 – How to Communicate with Us – For Staff: <https://sd46.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2070-How-to-Communicate-with-Us-ForStaff.pdf>