

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Background

Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools believes that when everyone works cooperatively and responsibly, relationships flourish. At the same time, Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools recognizes that employees, students, and parents are all engaged in the education of our students and differences in understanding, interpretation and opinion may occur. Therefore, protocol and procedures are established to help parents and staff resolve conflicts in a non-confrontational manner.

Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools believes:

- (a)** that by initiating a process of conflict resolution, it will be better able to promote conflict resolution that is ethically sound, that responds to the needs of students, staff and parents, and that is in keeping with the basic beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church;
- (b)** that when it takes a proactive approach and open stance toward conflict resolution, it is better able to facilitate increased cooperation, communication and understanding among the members of its school community;
- (c)** that conflict resolution is most successfully achieved when mutually acceptable solutions are arrived at through procedures that are designed to find what is in the best interests of the students as well as the individual school and the school district as a whole.

The following principles shall act as guidelines for the resolution of parent and staff conflicts in Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools:

- a)** Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools recognizes the freedom of all members of the school community (students, staff, parents and neighbors) to voice their concerns in an appropriate manner to the appropriate school personnel.
- (b)** The Principal has a responsibility to facilitate communication and to provide procedural direction to parents who initiate complaints or concerns in accordance with the policy and regulations.
- (c)** All parties in a conflict situation must recognize and respect the protocol, and more specifically the principle of "first contact." This means that the person(s) who have the concern, have a responsibility to begin addressing the concern directly with those persons with whom they have the concern before taking their concern elsewhere.
- (d)** All parties in a conflict situation shall be treated with, and have the responsibility to treat each other with fairness, dignity, and respect.

- (e) All parties will deal with their concerns in a manner that is consistent with the teachings of the Church.
- (f) Attempts will be made to deal with concerns that are brought to the attention of the Principal in an appropriate manner in a timely fashion.
- (g) Conflict resolution protocols shall respect the provisions of the Education Act, The Code of Professional Conduct of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools' Policies and Administrative Procedures.
- (h) If an individual wishes to file a complaint, the complaint must be written and signed and a copy of the signed complaint will be given to the individual.

Procedures

1. Any unsigned written complaints will be destroyed and not acted upon.
2. All individuals are required to operate on the principle of "**first contact**". For example, parents must address concerns directly to teachers before raising these concerns with the school administration or Catholic Education Services staff, when their concerns are about their child's teacher, program, and/or program support. Likewise, if a parent has a concern about the school administration, the parent is expected to deal with that concern with the school administration first, before raising these concerns with the Superintendent of Schools.
3. Once it has been established that there is a concern that needs to be addressed, the following process shall be initiated:
 - **Identify the individuals who must be present to resolve the concern.**
 - **Be prepared and establish a positive environment.**
 - Establish sufficient and a convenient time for the individuals to meet.
 - Select a neutral location at the school/ work site.
 - Determine a clear agenda or purpose prior to the meeting.
 - **Define or identify the concern.**
 - Determine what the concern is and what is not.
 - Have all individuals at the meeting state their concerns.
 - Check each response for clarification.
 - **Analyze the problem.**
 - Obtain as much information as possible about the concern(s).
 - Determine what is important to all participants and what they would like to achieve (their interests).
 - Attempt to establish common interest.
 - **Generate and document solution alternatives.**

- Accept all suggestions without judging.
 - Accept alternative means of achieving the result.
 - **Select a solution.**
 - Agree upon and implement the best alternative.
 - If there is no consensus, attempt to re-define the concern and brainstorm alternatives again.
 - **Assess the solution.**
 - Establish a timeframe for review.
 - Review the action plan at the agreed-upon time.
 - Assess whether the desired result was achieved.
4. If a concern cannot be resolved through this process, the appropriate supervisor shall investigate the circumstances and provide a mediated setting for a resolution.
 5. On occasion it may be necessary to involve a third party to facilitate.
 6. Persons handling concerns shall take appropriate action to correct errors or omissions by initiating change where matters fall within their authority and by submitting recommendations for change where matters are not within their realm of authority.
 7. Ongoing or chronic abuse/harassment within the District shall be addressed in accordance within Administrative Procedure 190, Anti-Harassment.

Reference: Section 53, Education Act
Cross-Reference: Administrative Procedure 190, Anti-Harassment
District Form: Form 152 A Resolving Conflict
Updated January 2020

CONFLICT RESOLUTION Form 152A

Date: _____

Names of Individuals at the Meeting _____

What is the Issue? _____

Action Plan

Resolution	Most Responsible Person	Follow Up

Signed: _____
