



Communication Guidelines

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Memo To: All Staff

From: Director of Education

ACCESSIBILITY:

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PURPOSE:

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board believes in open and transparent communication with the board's stakeholders. The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to set in place clear, concise, and easily followed communication procedures for dealing with questions or concerns that may from time to time arise in schools.

REFERENCES:

- Education Act and Regulations
- Policy/Program Memorandum 170
- Board Policy I 001 - "Ends"
- Board Policy IV 002 "Treatment of the Public"
- Board Policy IV 004 – "Treatment of Staff"
- APC036 – Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

FORMS:

- N/A

REPORTS:

- N/A

APPENDICES:

- N/A

COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

For the purposes of this memorandum, the term 'staff' means any employee of the Board.



Principals will ensure these communication guidelines are provided annually to their staff, school volunteers, Catholic School Advisory Council members, and families of students, and will inform parents how to access these guidelines upon registration of a new pupil and at the start of each school year.

Parents, students, staff, volunteers, and Trustees have a right to receive public affirmation for their positive efforts and, likewise, the right to know when concerns arise, what the concerns are, and who has raised them. All public and interpersonal communications must recognize the dignity of the individual and be conducted fairly, honestly, and with respect. When concerns arise, they will be dealt with directly by the individuals involved as outlined below.

Parent / Guardian / Stakeholder Communication Guidelines

When a parent, guardian or other board stakeholder has a concern or suggestion, it is expected that the concern/suggestion will first be taken up with the staff member with whom the parent / guardian / stakeholder has the concern/suggestion. Therefore, the following process will be followed:

Step One: Speak directly to the staff member. If the issue is not resolved, proceed to step two.

Step Two: Speak to the Principal. If the person with the concern has not yet addressed the issue with the staff member involved, the Principal will ask them to do so.

Step Three: If, having spoken to the Principal, the person with the concern believes the issue is not resolved, they may speak to the Superintendent of Learning responsible for the school.

Step Four: If, having spoken to the Superintendent of Learning responsible for the school, the person with the concern believes the issue is not resolved, they may speak to the Director of Education.

Step Five: If, having spoken to the Director of Education, the person with the concern believes the issue is not resolved, they may register as a delegation to address the Board of Trustees. Information on how to register as a delegation to the board is available in the [WCDSB General Operational & Procedural Bylaw](#). Please note that stakeholders are free to address the Board of Trustees as a registered delegation at any time, subject to any pertinent laws, regulations or board policies.

When receiving a concern/suggestion, staff must ensure to acknowledge the concern/suggestion within two business days. If the inquiry cannot be fully addressed within five business days, staff should provide an estimated response date to the involved parent / guardian / stakeholder.

Roles

Principal:

The Principal will involve the staff member in any discussions with the person who has the concern. The Principal may request, at any step in the process, that concerns be put in writing. The Principal may involve, at any time in the process, others who may be helpful in resolving the concern.

Trustees:

Parents, guardians, and other school board stakeholders may contact any Trustee at any time. The Trustee will assist the person with the concern in following the process outlined above.

School Council:

The School Council is not a forum to discuss parent-staff-student issues. If these matters are brought to any School Council member or any School Council meeting, the concern will be referred immediately to the Principal who will ensure the proper process is followed.

The purpose and role of School Councils is outlined in [Ontario Regulation 612/00](#).

For all other school-related concerns/suggestions that do not involve taking the matter up first with a staff member, the communication should be directed to the school Principal.

The effective use of these communication guidelines by all concerned will assist in the fair and timely resolution of concerns.