

# Administrative Procedures 151

## Inquiries and Complaints



Adopted: June 28, 2011

Amended: February 8, 2021

### External References

- Education Act: Sections 85, 87, 148, 151, 178.1

### Internal References

- AP 151 Inquiries and Complaints – Appendix A – Inquiries and Complaints Flowcharts
- Form 201-1 School Program Plan

## Background

The Division supports the right of parents and members of the public to make inquiries into the conduct of operations of the Division. In the interests of open communication, the Director believes that inquiries must first be directed to the staff members most directly involved in the operations in question. If the parent or member of the public is not satisfied with the response at that level, they are encouraged to follow the lines of authority as appropriate.

## Procedures

### 1. General Inquiries

- 1.1 In making a formal inquiry, the individual must be prepared to address their concern in person or in writing to the person or persons involved.
- 1.2 If the individual feels their concern has not been adequately addressed by the person against whom the complaint has been lodged, the concerns are to be taken to that person's immediate supervisor.
- 1.3 Upon receiving an inquiry, the Director or designate will ascertain if all local avenues for resolution have been considered. If not, the individual will be advised to do so as the first means of achieving resolution.
- 1.4 If all local avenues have been exhausted, the Director or designate will meet with the individual and school-based administrators or department managers in an attempt to resolve the issue.
- 1.5 Complaints concerning operations can be resolved with the parties involved. On occasion the Director or a trustee may receive a request to intervene in school or department affairs. In this event the complaint will be resolved according to the following:
  - 1.5.1 The Director or designate will, as appropriate in the circumstance, refer a complaint or request for intervention to the school or department, engage in mediation, or conduct an inquiry.
  - 1.5.2 The Director or designate will ensure that parents or members of the public are provided with the opportunity to express their complaints and be heard fairly by school-based administrators and/or by Division administrators.
  - 1.5.3 The trustee, upon receiving an inquiry, will refer the parent or public member back to the school or department and will inform the Director of the complaint. The complaint will then be dealt with as outlined above.

1.5.4 If resolution of the issue is not achieved at the Director level, the individual shall be advised of their right to a hearing by the Board if the matter significantly affects the education of a student.

## 2. Students with Intensive Needs - Designation, Placement or Program Inquiries

- 2.1 The parent/guardian contacts the school-level team respecting a student's designation, placement or program by contacting the school principal. Every effort will be made to resolve concerns at this level.
- 2.2 If there is no resolution, the parent/guardian will involve the Superintendent of Student Support Services.
- 2.3 If there is no resolution, the parent/guardian will involve the Director of Education.
- 2.4 If there is no resolution, the Director of Education may arrange for the appointment of a Mediator trained in mediation to assist the parties. In making such decision the Director shall consider the following:
  - 2.4.1 The wishes of the parents and their willingness to engage in the process;
  - 2.4.2 Depending on the maturity of the students, the wishes of the students and student's willingness to engage in the process;
  - 2.4.3 The nature of the issues in question;
  - 2.4.4 Other processes available to and/or undertaken by the parties;
  - 2.4.5 Time constraints that might affect the educational programming to be provided to the students;
  - 2.4.6 Availability of mediators; and
  - 2.4.7 Any other factors that the Director may reasonably consider relevant to that matter.
- 2.5 The Mediator shall invite the parents, and the Director of Education or delegate plus any other parties that the Mediator believes will assist in a resolution of the issues to attend at least one mediation session. Further sessions may be scheduled if agreed to by the Director of Education and the parents.
- 2.6 All reasonable costs associated with the mediation will be covered by the Board of Education.
- 2.7 The parents may at any time request a formal review pursuant to section 178.1 of The Education Act and upon such a request being made the informal mediation process shall terminate.

## Administrative Procedures 151 - Appendix A Inquiries and Complaints Flowcharts



Adopted: January 27, 2021

Amended: February 8, 2021

External References

Internal References

### Parent, Staff Member, Member of the Public

The first means of achieving resolution by an individual is to address the concern directly to the person you have the concern with. This may be done in person or in writing.

#### If the issue is unresolved....

The individual is to take the concern to that person's immediate supervisor.

#### If the issue is unresolved....

The individual is to take the concern to the Director or designate who will determine if all local avenues for resolution have been exhausted before meeting with the individual and the school-based administrator or department manager.

#### If the issue is unresolved....

- The Director may:
- i. refer the complaint back to the school or department
  - ii. engage in mediation
  - iii. conduct an inquiry, or
  - iv. consider the right to a hearing by the Board.

#### \*\*Important to Note\*\*

If matters are referred directly to a **Board Member** before following the steps above, the Board Member is to refer the individual back to the school or department and inform the Director of the complaint.

### Students with Intensive Needs - Designation, Placement or Program Inquiries

(Refer to Section 178.1 of The Education Act)

If a parent/guardian has a concern with their child's placement or program the matter is to be discussed with the school principal. Every effort will be made to resolve concerns at this level.

#### If the issue is unresolved....

The parent/guardian will involve the Superintendent of Student Support Services.

#### If the issue is unresolved....

The parent/guardian involves the Director of Education to either find a resolution or begin a mediation process.