



## PROCEDURE

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Title:	<b>RESOLVING PUBLIC CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS</b>	Procedure No.: 2030a Effective Date: 2016 February 23
Department:	Director's Services	
Reference(s):	<i>Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014</i> <i>Public Concerns and Complaints Policy</i>	

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Effective and on-going communication at every level of the system is integral to ensuring that all of our students are successful.

### 1.0 Guiding Principles for Addressing Parent/Guardian/Stakeholder Concerns

- 1.1 Every individual or group who may have a concern will have the opportunity to have it addressed within a climate of mutual respect and trust.
- 1.2 It is the practice to resolve the concern at the level with the staff member who is directly involved, whenever possible.
- 1.3 Staff will respond to concerns according to Thames Valley District School Board policies and procedures, and seek to find mutually acceptable solutions.
- 1.4 Concerns will be addressed in a timely manner, with a first response of acknowledgement within two business days, with the possible exception when staff may be on vacation.
- 1.5 In certain situations, it will be the practice of the board to share personal or confidential information with board employees to address any questions or concerns. The sender has the right to request that their personal or confidential information not be shared and may submit a request directly to the intended recipient.

### 2.0 Role of Trustees in Resolving Public Concerns

Trustees play an important role in the education of our Thames Valley students. They are responsible for developing policy and approving the Board's budget. They are also a key link between the community and schools, and are our champions of our rich and diverse system of public education. Concerns about these responsibilities should be directed to your Trustee.

Administered By: **Director's Services**

Amendment Date(s): [2023 September 5,](#)

Most Recent EIE Review Date:

The local trustee can greatly assist in facilitating communication by directing the parent/guardian to the appropriate staff person at the school and/or board level. Parents/guardians and community members may contact trustees at any time. Their contact information is found on the Thames Valley website at:

[www.tvdsb.ca/board.cfm?subpage=79700](http://www.tvdsb.ca/board.cfm?subpage=79700)

### **3.0 Process to Resolve a Concern**

When individuals or groups raise concerns, staff will take steps to identify the issue and propose resolutions, as outlined below.

#### **Step 1: Review of the issue with the student's Teacher/other staff member by a Parent/Guardian**

The starting point for any concern or issue which is related to classroom activities is with the teacher. Contact the teacher directly to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss the issue.

If the concern or issue involves another staff member, please contact that person directly to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss the issue.

#### **Step 2: Review of the issue with the school Principal**

If the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the issue with the teacher/other staff member, it should be discussed with the Principal or Vice-Principal (if applicable). If a member of the community would like to discuss an issue which involves the school, the first point of contact is the Principal. The Principal will gather the facts from all those involved in order to clarify the issue, and resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

#### **Step 3: Review of the issue with the school's Superintendent of Student Achievement**

If the parent/guardian is not able to resolve the issue with the Principal, they may request that the issue be reviewed by the school's Superintendent of Student Achievement. The Superintendent of Student Achievement will gather the facts from the Principal and Parent/Guardian and review the matter as it relates to Board Policies and Procedures, and will respond to the parent/guardian about the concerns. The listing of Superintendents of Student Achievement is found at:

<http://www.tvdsb.ca/welcome.cfm?subpage=261935>

Concerns relating to the special education needs of a child would first be discussed with the schools' Superintendent of Student Achievement. There may also be the involvement of the Superintendent and/or staff responsible for Special Education.

#### **Step 4: Review of the issue with a member of the Director's Office**

## **Resolving Public Concerns and Complaints**

If the parent/guardian and the Superintendent of Student Achievement are not able to resolve the issue, they may request that the matter be reviewed by a member of the Director's Office. The matter may be reviewed by an Associate Director or the Director of Education and parents/guardians will receive a response about the issue presented. Such matters will typically be of a systemic nature. Contact the Director's Office for guidance.

### **4.0 Resolving Non-instructional Matters**

Non-instructional matters will be addressed by the staff member who has direct involvement with the issue – including staff in the following departments: Facilities Services, Capital Planning, Human Resource Services, Business Services, and Transportation. If a concern or issue is not resolved by the appropriate staff member, the parent/guardian/individual may request that the issue be reviewed by the appropriate Supervisor and/or member of senior administration (Executive Officer - Facilities Services and Capital Planning, Superintendent of Business or Superintendent of Student Achievement (Human Resources)). All matters will be governed by the appropriate Board Policies and Procedures.

### **5.0 Community Delegations/Groups**

Delegations/groups who wish to have their concerns heard by staff should contact Corporate Services, who will assist in facilitating meetings/presentations with staff, the Board, and/or Board Committees.

### **6.0 Representative of the Parent/Guardian**

- 6.1 The Board recognizes that the parent/guardian may need support in meetings with board staff in order for them to adequately address their child's needs, for e.g. support from a friend or knowledgeable other.
- 6.2 Parents/guardians have the right to have a representative of their choosing in attendance with board staff, subject to any limitations established in these procedures. Any costs/expenses associated with such a representative are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. If parents/guardians wish to bring legal counsel to the meeting, administration may also have legal counsel present.
- 6.3 Staff and parents/guardians will be notified in advance of a meeting who will be in attendance. It is the responsibility of both the parent/guardian and administration to notify the other with this information.

### **7.0 Accessibility Requirements**

If specific accessibility requirements or alternate communication supports are required, arrangements will be made upon request. This includes but is not limited to, translation services and/or interpreters.

## 8.0 Matters That Would Not Be Discussed With Staff

- 8.1 Although the subject matter of meetings between parents/guardians and staff may be fairly broad, these meetings will generally relate to the education of the parents'/guardians' child at the school in question.
- 8.2 There are certain matters that staff members are unable to discuss with parents/guardians/community members, including personal details or disciplinary matters concerning another student(s), and matters related to staff performance issues. Parents/guardians are still able to share such matters with staff, with the understanding that they will not receive a response from staff regarding outcomes or consequences.
- 8.3 In the event that discussion cannot be limited to the subject matter that led to the meeting, staff will bring closure to the meeting.

## 9.0 Role of School Councils

The purpose of school councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. - *Ontario Regulation 612/00 s.2 (1)*

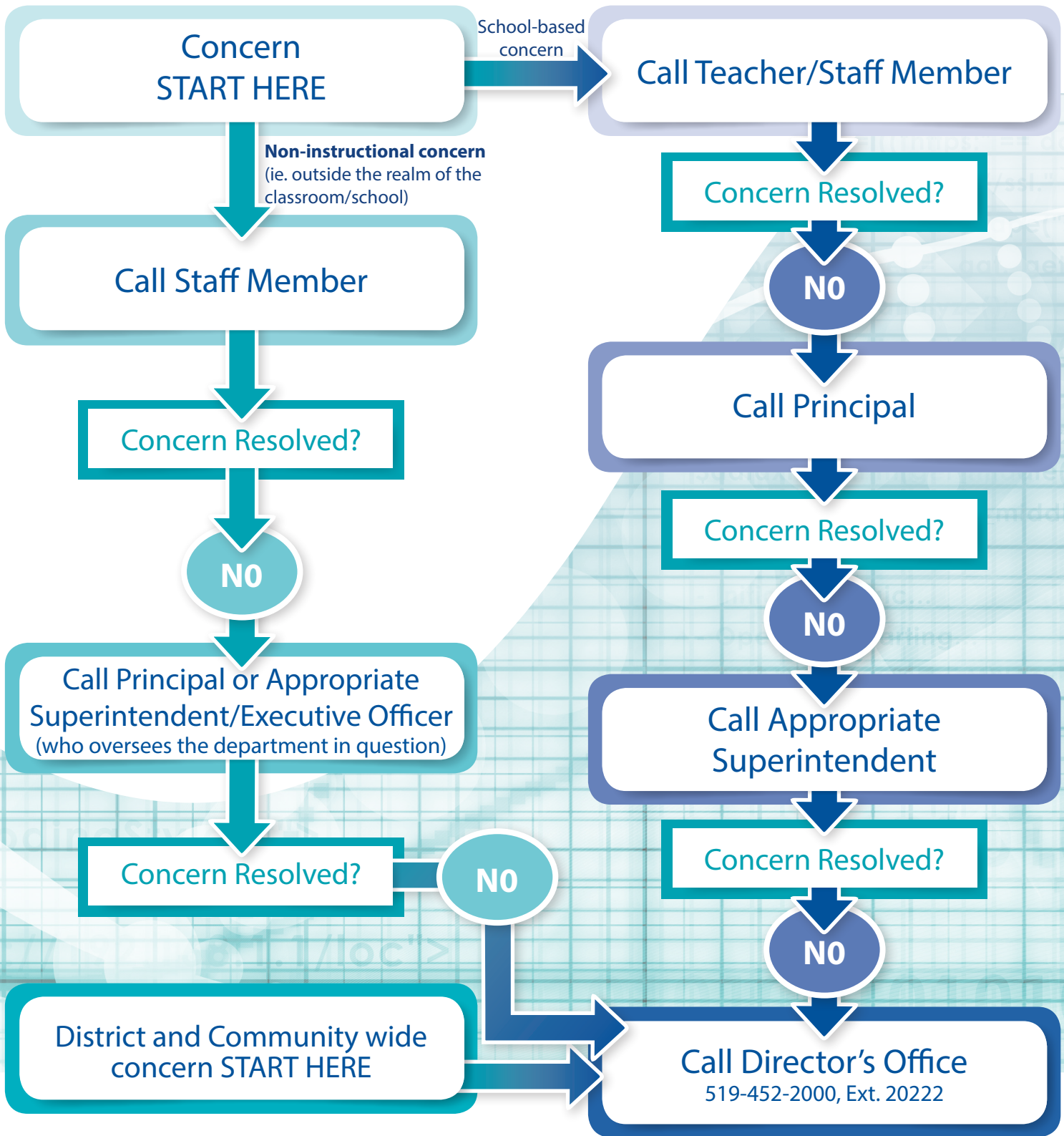
A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with this Regulation to the principal of the school and the board that established the council. - *Ontario Regulation 612/00, s. 2 (2)*

School Councils are established to advise Principals on matters such as, but not limited to, the implementation of the school improvement plan, and student code of behaviour. They are not a forum to discuss individual issues related to students, teachers, or other staff, including the Principal. Individual issues brought to a School Council meeting should be referred immediately to the Principal. For more information about the role of School Councils, please refer to:

<https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>



# Addressing Concerns @ TVDSB



**Your Trustee** can help **guide** you through this process.

Find your **Trustee** and/or **Superintendent** by calling:

**519-452-2000**  
or go online @ [www.tvdsb.ca](http://www.tvdsb.ca)