

 St. Michael's College School	School Operations
Policy: Parent Concern	D7.06.20

A. PURPOSE

St. Michael's College School (the "School") encourages the involvement of all members of its community in establishing and sustaining a safe and nurturing school environment. This Parent Concern Policy (the "Policy") outlines the procedures for addressing educational concerns brought to the School's attention by parents. All members, including parents, are to abide by the School's Code of Conduct. Appropriate flexibility will be exercised in implementing these procedures to suit individual circumstances.

Commitment to Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Concern:** a school-related problem or issue affecting a child/children, families or the community, which is perceived to require the attention of the School.
2. **Parent:** includes guardian or any caregiver with recognized responsibility for the care of the student; in this document the word *parents* includes families, and parent groups.

C. PROCEDURES

1. Classroom or Co-Curricular Concerns Brought to the Principal

If a parent brings a concern to the Principal about a classroom or teacher-related matter, the Principal will undertake one or more of the following actions depending on the nature of the concern and its circumstances:

- (a) Refer the parent to the teacher to discuss the concern and resolve it at that level;
- (b) Gather any relevant information to determine the facts and circumstances;
- (c) Discuss the concern with the teacher and offer advice to the teacher, where advice is required to resolve the concern and inform the parent of the outcome;
- (d) Meet jointly with the teacher and the parent to discuss the concern where the Principal determines that such a meeting will resolve the concern;

- (e) Consult with other appropriate School leadership or external legal counsel, depending on the nature of the concern, in order to assist in reaching a resolution.

2. Other School Concerns Brought to the Principal

If a parent brings a concern about a school policy, procedure, activity, event, or situation to a Principal, the Principal will undertake one or more of the following actions depending on the nature of the concern and its circumstances:

- (a) Gather any relevant information to determine the facts and circumstances;
- (b) Consult with other appropriate School leadership or external legal counsel, depending on the nature of the concern, in order to assist in reaching a resolution;
- (c) Where the parent brings a concern about a policy or program matter which is beyond the scope or jurisdiction of the School to address, the Principal will advise the parent of the appropriate person(s) to whom such concern should be directed, and assists the parent with the referral where necessary.
- (d) Provide the parent with updates as needed or deemed necessary about the progress made in resolving the concern.

3. School Concerns Brought to the President

- (a) If a parent or parent group bring a concern directly to the President, the President refers the matter to the appropriate member of Administration.

4. Guidelines for Employees

In addressing parents' concerns, School employees will strive to:

- (a) Foster a climate of respect and trust which focuses on working towards mutually acceptable solutions;
- (b) Ensure that every parent with a concern has an adequate opportunity to express the concern fully;
- (c) Encourage the parent to address the concern at the level at which the concern is related, except where circumstances warrant otherwise;
- (d) Conduct a process for addressing a concern that is seen to be fair by the parent and by all other parties directly involved in addressing the concern;
- (e) Maintain a written record of the concern(s) where necessary;
- (f) Provide the parent with timely updates, as needed, about the progress made in resolving the concern;

- (g) Adhere to the relevant procedures governed by legislation or School policy where the concern relates to such legislation or policy.

5. Guidelines for Parents

In bringing concerns to the School, parents will strive to:

- (a) Present their concerns to School staff in a respectful manner which allows the opportunity for due consideration of the concern;
- (b) Allow for a reasonable timeline for addressing and resolving the concern;
- (c) Address the concern first to the staff person(s) responsible for the area to which the concern directly relates, unless circumstances warrant raising the concern with staff at a higher level;
- (d) Direct the concern about a School policy or program matter to the appropriate School leader where the concern should be addressed at those levels;
- (e) Maintain an openness to receiving the information and advice that may be offered by the School as possible resolutions to the concern;
- (f) Ensure that confidentiality is maintained concerning personal or private matters addressed by the parties.

6. Guidelines for Appeals

If a parent disagrees with the decision made by Administration, the parent has the option of initiating a review process with the President. The President will ask the parent to put in writing the reason for the disagreement, along with applicable documentation. The President will advise Administration of this review process, and receive Administration's written response. The President will investigate the concern and respond in writing to both the parent and Administration within 30 days of receipt of the parent's concern. The decision of the President is final. The documentation related to the concern will remain with the Human Resources Manager.

Under normal circumstances, a student will not be deprived of a Catholic education at St. Michael's College School on grounds relating to the attitude or behavior of parent(s)/guardian(s).

Nevertheless, a situation could arise in which the uncooperative, defiant or disruptive attitude of a parent/guardian will so diminish the effectiveness of the school's endeavors to educate the student, so that continuation of the student's education would be greatly impaired. The School reserves the right, on a case by case basis, to review the behaviour of the parent towards any teacher, administrator, coach or staff member of the school, and determine the future of the student and family as members of the St. Michael's College School community.