

D9 Concerns and Complaints policy

Outcome statement

All complaints, concerns and incidents are attended to promptly, respectfully and professionally and seek to bring effective resolution to all parties concerned.

Scoping

In order to maintain a safe and comfortable environment for all students, staff and visitors, an accessible procedure for handling complaints and grievances will be implemented and maintained to provide an open and fair way of resolving issues and will comply with all relevant legislation.

Delegations

The board delegates to the principal full responsibility of ensuring processes are in place and operating effectively and adequately. In the event of a complaint or grievance concerning the principal, responsibility lies with the board.

Expectations and limitations

In complying with the policy, the principal shall not fail to:

- implement and maintain robust procedures to meet the policy requirements
- ensure that the process for complaints or grievances is clearly communicated
- report to the board as follows:
 - When receiving a complaint, the board must ensure that the complainant has previously followed the school's concerns and complaints procedure and that the complaint has been escalated to board level correctly.
 - Should the board receive a complaint regarding the principal or determine that any policy violation may have occurred, the board in the first instance will consider whether this may be dealt with in an informal manner (as per the employment agreement provisions that apply to the principal).
 - Where the board considers the degree and seriousness of the concern or any violation sufficient to warrant initiating a disciplinary or competency process, the board shall seek the support and advice in the first instance from an NZSTA adviser to ensure due process is followed.

Procedures/supporting documentation

Concerns and complaints process

Monitoring

The principal shall maintain a register of complaints and resolutions and report to the board at least quarterly per annum outlining numbers of complaints, resolution success figures and any areas of concern for board deliberation.

This policy and related procedures will be reviewed by the Review Committee as per the tri-annual review cycle. Recommendations will be brought to the full Board of Trustees. Guidelines for the review can be found in the review Manual

Reviewed: May 2021	Next review: May 2024
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C4 Concerns and Complaints Process

Starting point

Your concern or problem
Involves a classroom matter or
a particular staff member

No

Your concern or problem does
not involve a classroom matter
or particular staff member or
has not been resolved by
visiting the staff member

No

Your concern or problem
has not been resolved by
visiting the staff member or the
principal or it involves the
principal or board of trustees

Yes

Talk with the relevant staff
member about the issue. Be
prepared to listen to their point
of view. This may require more
than one meeting and / or
involve the team leader.

Yes

Write a note or phone the
principal and make a time to
discuss the concern or
problem. Indicate before the
discussion what the concern is
about and the steps you have
taken to remedy it.

You now have a complaint

Provide feedback to the staff
member as to whether you
were satisfied or not to ensure
the problem is settled.

Discuss with the principal, be
prepared to listen to their point
of view also and provide
feedback to ensure the
problem is settled. The
concern may be referred back
to the staff member(s)
particularly where this process
has not been followed to date.

Write to the board of trustees
via the chair outlining your
problem, concern or complaint
in detail and all actions taken
to date. The chair will need to
ensure the correct process
has been followed before the
board will consider and may
direct you back to the staff
member or the principal.
Include your name, signature
and contact numbers. Your
complaint will be
acknowledged along with an
expected timeframe for
resolution.

Issue Resolved?

Yes

Issue Resolved?

Yes

Except in exceptional
circumstances, the board of
trustees will not accept any
complaint unless it is in writing
and a reasonable attempt has
been made to resolve it
through this process. Once the
board has considered and
resolved the complaint, the
board will endeavour to
convene a follow-up contact
within 1 month

No further action is required

C4.1 Board complaints checklist

Once a letter of complaint has been received, the board chair should ensure the following process is followed:

	Notes/date completed
1. Ensure the process has been followed as outlined in the concerns and complaints procedure or is a genuine complaint against the principal or board.	
2. Verify with the principal that any staff (or others) identified in the complaint are aware of the situation and that there has been discussion and attempts to reconcile.	
3. If the complaint or action is employment related or has potential industrial relations implications, contact the NZSTA employment advisory and support centre. For all other complaints, contact the NZSTA governance advisory and support centre.	
4. Alert the school's insurance broker.	
5. Acknowledge the letter of complaint within 7 days and advise the board process, or redirect the complainant to principal, syndicate leader or staff member as appropriate. Report to the board without names or detail at the next meeting.	
6. Once confirmed as a complaint, forward it confidentially to all trustees for consideration.	
7. Board request to principal to present full written report outlining all actions taken, advice received, meetings held and justified decisions made.	
8. Board determines whether the above fully satisfies them of full and fair process. If so, the board supports the principal and advises the complainant.	

<p>9. If not satisfied, the board meets and discusses in committee, determines whether to formally meet the complainant and delegates responsibility to trustee(s) as deemed appropriate.</p>	
<p>10. Board delegates meet with the complainant and discuss the complaint more fully, verifies, investigates and clarifies. Support persons should be confirmed as welcome to attend.</p>	
<p>11. Board delegates report back to full board and recommend actions/decisions.</p>	
<p>12. Board takes appropriate actions, records and formally minutes decisions.</p>	
<p>13. Board advises complainant in writing of its provisional decisions and factors considered in reaching them, within 21 days of complaint receipt, unless otherwise agreed by all parties. Complainant is given opportunity to comment before the board's final decision is reached and given.</p>	
<p>14. Board endeavours to convene follow-up meeting within 1 month of step 9.</p>	