

# **DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

## **Background**

The Peace River School Division values open, respectful communication and recognizes the right of parents, guardians, and community members to ask questions, seek clarification, or express concerns regarding Division programs, services, decisions or operations. To support timely and effective dispute resolution, the Division believes that concerns are best addressed first by the staff member(s) most directly involved in the matter. If the parents or members of the public are not satisfied with the response at that level, they are to be encouraged to follow the channels of communication as appropriate. The Division believes that when this process is followed, almost all concerns will be resolved without the need for Superintendent (or designate) involvement.

## **Procedures**

Parents, guardians, or community members who have a concern are expected to follow the steps outlined below:

### **Initial Contact – Staff Member Closest to the Matter of Concern**

1. Concerns should first be discussed with the staff member directly involved in the matter (e.g., teacher, educational assistant, or other school-based staff). This is best accomplished through direct contact with the appropriate staff member. However, if the complainant is uncomfortable doing so, they are expected to contact the school principal to assist in arranging a meeting with the appropriate staff member.

### **School Administration – Principal**

2. If the concern remains unresolved after contact with the staff member(s), the matter should be referred to the school principal, who will work with all parties to seek resolution.

### **Central Office – Superintendent (or designate)**

3. In the rare circumstance where a concern remains unresolved despite the best efforts of all parties at the school level, the parents, guardians, or community members may refer the matter to the Superintendent's office. The Superintendent (or designate) will review the matter in the context of Division Administrative Procedures, Board Policies and relevant legislation.
4. Following the review, the Superintendent may meet with the parties involved to hear all perspectives and attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. This step represents the final level of administrative review. Complainants will be advised of their right to appeal the matter to the PRSD Board of Trustees if they believe the matter remains unresolved and is having a significant negative impact on their student's education.

### Appeal to the Board of Trustees

5. As the implementation of Administrative Procedures falls under the authority of the Superintendent and staff, appeals to the Board of Trustees will only be considered if the complainant can demonstrate that the unresolved matter is significantly negatively impacting their student's education.
6. If an appeal is submitted in writing to the Board Chair, along with relevant supporting information, the Board will decide within 10 business days if the matter will be heard, or if the Superintendent's decisions will stand.
7. The complainant will be advised in writing of the Board's decision, including whether the Superintendent's decision is upheld or whether the matter will proceed to an appeal hearing.

Adopted/Revised/Reviewed: JUN 2016/NOV 2019/MAR 2026

Reference: *Education Act* s. 32, 33, 40, 41, 42, 43, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222  
Board Policy 5 - Role of the Board Chair  
Board Policy 11 - Board Delegation of Authority  
Board Policy 12 - Role of the Superintendent  
Administrative Procedure 110 - School Councils  
Administrative Procedure 390 - Appeals Concerning Student Matters