

# 136 EXTERNAL CONCERN/COMPLAINT PROTOCOL

## Beliefs

The Maskwacis Education Schools Commission (MESC) follows the cultural and traditional teachings of the Maskwacis Cree, in particular, Wahkohtowin. Wahkohtowin is the belief that all things are related and connected, that all of existence has spirit and that living in a good way requires us to maintain good relationships with each other and other aspects of existence. We recognize that respect for mother earth, elders, youth, and the Treaties are paramount to planning ahead and making decisions for future generations.

MESC supports the rights of individuals to make inquiries into the conduct of operations of MESC. By initiating a process of conflict resolution, it will be better able to promote conflict resolution that is ethically sound, that responds to the needs of students, staff and parents, and that is in keeping with the core values and practices of MESC. Conflict resolution is most successfully achieved when mutually acceptable solutions are arrived at through procedures that are designed to find what is in the best interests of the students, as well as the individual school and the school commission as a whole. MESC desires to maintain a climate of respect and trust which focuses on working towards mutually acceptable solutions.

## Procedures

1. For the purposes of this administrative procedure, External refers to non-MESC employees such as parents, grandparents, caregivers or anyone who wishes to bring to the attention of MESC a concern or complaint about MESC operations or policies. Employees or others who work for or with MESC shall refer to AP 137 Internal Concerns/complaints Resolution.
2. In making a formal inquiry, the person must be prepared to address his/her concerns in person or in writing to the person(s) involved.
3. The following principles shall act as guidelines for the resolution of external conflicts in MESC schools and departments
  - 3.1. The MESC recognizes the right of all individuals to voice their concerns in an appropriate manner to the appropriate Commission personnel;
  - 3.2. Concerns or complaints must be made at an appropriate time and place in a respectful manner;
  - 3.3. Concerns or complaints must be made in a confidential space to ensure privacy and operations are not disrupted.
4. Concerns and complaints should be handled with respect and in a courteous manner according to the following:

- 4.1. A Commission Board Member, upon receiving an inquiry, will refer the individual back to the school or department and will inform the Superintendent of the complaint.
  - 4.2. Parents/Caregivers must address concerns directly to teachers before raising these concerns with the school administration when their concerns are about their child's teacher, program, and/or program support;
  - 4.3. If an individual has a concern about the school administration or department, they are expected to deal with that concern with the school or department administration, before raising concerns with the Superintendent of Schools;
  - 4.4. If, in the view of the complainant, the ruling of the school or department administration is unsatisfactory, the complainant may address his/her concern(s) to the Superintendent in writing. The letter must outline the nature of the original complaint, the steps that have been taken, and in what way the decision of the school principal or department supervisor is unacceptable. Upon receiving the inquiry, the Superintendent or designate will ascertain if all avenues for resolutions have been considered.
  - 4.5. If resolution of the issues is not achieved at the Superintendent level, the individual shall be informed of the right to appeal to the Board.
  - 4.6. All parties will deal with their concerns in a manner that is consistent with the MESC Core Values.
5. A concern or complaint must be handled in a confidential manner, in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act.
  6. The school or department administration has a responsibility to facilitate communication and to provide procedural direction to individuals who initiate complaints or concerns in accordance with MESC procedures.
  7. Attempts will be made to deal with concerns that are brought to the attention of the school or department in an appropriate manner in a timely fashion.

Reference:

Personal information Protection Act

GP-15: Handling of Operation Complaints - MESC Board of Governors Policy

AP 137 Internal Concerns/complaints Conflict Resolution