

 <p>Cree School Board Commission scolaire crie</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Examination Process regarding Complaints from Students and Parents</h2> <p>Department responsible: Secretary General Effective date: April 21, 2021 by Resolution CC 2019-145 Amended by: <i>Resolutions</i> CC 2021-032, CC 2021-041 and 2023-094</p>
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The Cree School Board is committed to building strong and positive relationships with students, parents and community and recognizes that there will be occasions where concerns regarding its service delivery may arise. Therefore, the Board deems necessary to establish a process to deal with complaints from students and their parents to ensure that concerns are brought to the attention of the organization and are appropriately dealt with in a clear, fair and effective way.

1) Principles

1.1. Complaints, questions or expressions of concern shall be dealt with in a manner that reflects mutual respect and the process dealing with such situations should ensure that complaints are:

- handled as near the source as possible;
- investigated and resolved expeditiously;
- dealt with in a courteous and constructive manner and that individuals involved or against whom complaints are made have an opportunity to respond.

[Complaint](#)

1.2. A complaint is defined as any verbal or written communication expressing dissatisfaction with the application of policies, procedures, programs, services or actions of the Board. Reasons for complaints are for instance if a policy was not followed, if a decision was deemed discriminatory.

The normal channel to address an issue shall be from the complainant to the concerned employee, to the employee's immediate supervisor, and then to a higher level of authority.

There are a variety of stages available to support the resolution of issues. Wherever possible and appropriate, parties to a complaint are encouraged to try to resolve concerns at the earliest possible stage.

2) Application

2.1. This Policy applies to complaints from students under the jurisdiction of the Board or entitled to certain services of the Board excluding situations of:

- a disciplinary nature regarding the conduct of staff members of the Board. Such complaint shall be directed to Human Resources and will be dealt with in accordance with the applicable laws and collective agreements;
- harassment complaints, since covered by the *CSB Policy Against Harassment*;
- Ministry of Education and CSB exams, since covered by the CSB Policies on evaluation.

3) Definitions

3.1. In this Policy, the following words or expressions mean:

- a) **Complainant:** a student of the School Board or his parent;
- b) **Complaint:** a notice served to the Board regarding the dissatisfaction of one or several students or their parents with the services offered or received;
- c) **Ombudsperson:** a person appointed by the Board to assist with the fair and expeditious resolution of complaints in an impartial, confidential and independent manner;
- d) **Parent:** a person having parental authority or the person having custody of the student (guardian);
- e) **Student:** a person entitled to:
 - receive instructional services provided by the Board at the Youth sector under the Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons as well as at the Adult Education and Vocational Training sectors;
 - enroll in a program under the Professional Development Department (Teacher Training);
 - CSB Post-secondary Sponsorship Program or CSB Educational Assistance Program.

4) Process

4.1. The complainant shall follow the following steps:

[Concerned employee](#)

Step 1: Review the issue with the concerned employee as soon as possible after the event or decision that resulted in the dissatisfaction;

[Immediate supervisor](#)

Step 2: If the issue remains unsatisfactorily resolved, the complainant may submit a complaint to the employee's immediate supervisor. The complaint shall be in writing but the person receiving the complaint may help the complainant to fill the form. The supervisor will review the

substance of the complaint, and immediately inform HR if the complaint is about inappropriate staff conduct subject to disciplinary measures. If not, he will:

- a) hear the parties concerned by the event or decision and may call upon additional resources as necessary;
- b) render a decision within 30 days of the reception of the complaint unless a longer delay is justified for instance during the summer holidays or when an investigation is required, and
- c) communicate his decision to the complainant with a copy to the Secretary-General, and
- d) advise the complainant that if he is not satisfied with the outcome, he may appeal one level up (i.e., to the Director of School Operations for a Principal's decision, to the Deputy Director for a Director's decision, etc.);

[One level up](#)

Step 3: If the complaint remains unsatisfactorily resolved, the complainant may submit the issue in writing one level up (of the immediate supervisor) and the following process will be applied:

- a) acknowledgment receipt sent within 5 business days;
- b) verification that:
 - due process as defined in steps 1 and 2 has been followed unless there are valid circumstances;
 - concerned parties are informed that a complaint has been made;
- c) the substance of the complaint will be reviewed, and it will be decided if:
 - the complaint will be returned to Step 2 for reconsideration, or
 - the decision under Step 2 will be either maintained, overturned or will be dealt in a specific manner;
- d) the complaint under Step 3 shall be dealt with within 30 days of its reception unless a longer time limit is justified for instance during the summer holidays or when an investigation is required;
- e) the complainant will be informed by letter accordingly with a copy to the Secretary-General;

[Ombudsperson](#)

Step 4: If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the process defined in Step 3, he may then submit his concerns to the CSB Ombudsperson within 30 days of the last decision communicated to him. The Ombudsperson will examine the complaint and ensure that it meets the conditions established in this Policy before going any further.

4.2 The Ombudsperson:

- a) intervenes only after the complainant has exhausted the other remedies provided for in the complaint examination procedure except in situations described in section 4.3;

- b) may refuse or cease to examine a complaint if he has reasonable cause to believe that intervening would clearly serve no purpose or the length of time having elapsed between the events that gave rise to the dissatisfaction of the user and the filing of the complaint make it impossible to examine the complaint;
- c) may require the cooperation of any staff member of the Board whose assistance is considered necessary, however, it is understood that the Ombudsperson has no authority over the personnel of the Board;
- d) when he is of the opinion that the complaint should be retained, he will submit his recommendations to the Council of Commissioners. This process should normally be done within 60 days of receiving the complaint;
- e) has the ability to request meetings and documentation from CSB representatives, in the context of conducting investigations. The relevant manager shall respond to the Ombudsperson's request within a delay of three (3) working days, being understood that the CSB is under no obligation to provide to the Ombudsperson any information which may be confidential or privileged.

The Ombudsperson must submit an annual report stating the number of complaint referrals received and their nature, the corrective measures recommended, and any action taken. The report may include any recommendation the Ombudsperson considers appropriate with respect to measures required to prevent and stop bullying and violence.

[Exception](#)

4.3. In certain situations, because of the potential serious circumstances involved, the above steps may be circumvented in favour of direct exchange with the Ombudsperson, namely by considering the following:

- how serious, complicated or urgent the complaint is;
- whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety;
- how the person making the complaint is being affected;
- the risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed;
- whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organizations or stakeholders.

5) Information and Records

5.1. Complainants will be provided with:

- information about CSB complaint-handling process;
- the reasons for the decision and any options for redress or review.

[Confidentiality](#)

5.2. The Board will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is feasible and appropriate. Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by the Board as permitted under the relevant privacy laws and any relevant confidentiality obligations.

[Receipt of complaints](#)

5.3. Unless the complaint has been resolved at the outset, the person receiving the complaint will record the complaint and its supporting information which will

document:

- the contact information of the person making a complaint;
- issues raised by the person making a complaint and the expected outcome;
- any other relevant information.

This will be forwarded to the Secretary General.

[Redress and review](#)

5.4. A record will be kept about:

- how the complaints were managed;
- the outcome of the complaints (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated, any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations), and
- any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

Moreover, the Secretary General will keep records of :

- the number of complaints received;
- the outcome of complaints, including matters resolved at the frontline;
- issues arising from complaints.

6) Final Provisions

[Anonymous, false or malicious complaints](#)

6.1. Anonymous or pseudonymous complaints shall not be considered by the Board, unless it is believed that such complaint references an illegal, abusive or child protection matter, or is otherwise believed to be relevant in law in which case they will be referred to the appropriate authority, such as the police or the Director of Youth Protection.

It is recognized that false or malicious complaints may damage the reputation of, or be unjust to, the people involved and, therefore, appropriate action will apply to any individual making such complaint.

[Retaliation](#)

6.2. Respondents who take retaliation action against students or other individuals who filed a complaint may be subject to discipline.

[Final recourse](#)

6.3. Once a complaint filed has been dealt with according to this Policy, there is no further recourse for the same complaint and subsequent decision.

[Conflict of Interest](#)

6.4. In cases where a manager assuming a role defined in this Policy appears to be in a situation of conflict of interest due to the parties involved, his immediate superior will assume this role.

7) Application of this Policy

[Previous provisions](#)

7.1. The present Policy replaces all other policies of the Board pertaining to this subject, if any, while respecting the Council of Commissioners policies where applicable.

[Official version](#)

7.2. The official version of this Policy is kept by the Secretary General.

[Responsibility](#)

7.3. Any person referred to in this Policy must abide by all its provisions and all managers of the Board are responsible for ensuring that all its provisions are applied and respected.

The Secretary General is the person responsible for providing support in the interpretation of this Policy and to ensure its revision when necessary in consultation with the Council of Commissioners. Moreover, the Secretary General may develop any necessary procedures and guidelines in order to implement the present Policy.



Cree School Board
Commission scolaire crie

COMPLAINT FORM

Submitted by: _____

Personal Information of the student

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email: _____

Student Status: Elementary Secondary Adult/Vocational Post-Secondary
Professional Development Department (*Teacher Training*)

CSB School/Centre Name: _____

In-community Off-community

DESCRIBE the SITUATION / DECISION (you may use additional sheets as required)

Nature of the issue:

STEPS TAKEN TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE

1)

2)

(add any other)

List the CSB Staff consulted with this complaint, their answers and the dates

EXPECTED RESULTS

Please feel free to attach additional information relevant to this complaint for further reference.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the facts stated in this complaint form are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I authorize the Cree School Board to make inquiries to staff within the school or centre or departments as needed to evaluate the situation. I agree that this complaint may be shared with persons in authority within the Board.

I further understand that any false declaration stated in this form is subject to appropriate sanctions or measure.

Student Signature: _____

Parents' Signature *(if the student is a minor)*: _____

Date: _____

FOR CSB USE ONLY

Received by: _____

Action taken: _____

Signature: _____

