



Major Complaints Policy

Rationale

Sacred Heart School recognizes that parents, students, teachers, and support staff form an integral part of the Catholic school community. From time to time, issues may arise where members of the community may differ in their perspectives.

Policy

At Sacred Heart School all complaints must be dealt with in a timely manner. Each member of the community is expected to follow the appropriate complaint procedure as described below. All parties involved must maintain confidentiality with respect to all aspects of this procedure and conduct themselves with Christian charity.

Procedure

Every effort should be made wherever possible to resolve the issue by the parties directly involved. If the issue cannot be resolved, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Principal of the school following the procedure outlined below.

- The Principal will clarify the issue(s) of disagreement and document all matters pertaining to the issue and its resolution and determine what policy(ies) of Sacred Heart School or CISVA can be applied to resolve the issue. If necessary, advisers might include the Pastor, Chairperson of the Education Committee and a representative from the Superintendent's Office, or others, to facilitate a resolution of the issue. This may include a process of mediation as facilitated by the Superintendent's Office.
- The Principal, having made a judgment to resolve the issue, shall promptly notify both parties of the resolution in writing within seven (7) days of receipt of the complaint. In this written notification, the parties must be informed of the available appeal process.
- If the Principal's resolution is not accepted, the matter may be appealed to the Education Committee. The appeal must be submitted in writing no more than seven (7) days after the Principal's decision has been received.

Complaints Against the Principal

- Where one of the parties is the Principal and the two parties are unable to resolve the issue in a timely manner, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Pastor and Chair of the Education Committee. The Chair will then proceed per the procedures outlined above and the Appeals Process set out below.

Appeals Process

1. Upon receiving the complaint or appeal, the Education Committee will form a sub-committee with authority to make a decision regarding the appeal. This sub-committee should include the school's Pastor/Archbishop's Representative. The sub-committee will study the documentation and then: either call a meeting to hear representations from the complainant and the Principal or call for further written submissions having circulated each party's submission to the other. Both parties will be in attendance and be given an opportunity to respond should an oral hearing take place. *The decision of*



the Principal will not be overturned if school or CISVA policy and procedures were appropriately and fairly applied.

2. After this, the sub-committee shall, in camera, present its decision to the Education Committee. The Education Committee will ratify the decision and take the steps necessary to implement it. If the resolution requires disciplinary action, the Education Committee must consult with the Superintendent before implementing the recommended action. The Education Committee may reject the sub-committee's decision only if there is a serious flaw in the process followed by the sub-committee. At that time, the Superintendent must be notified and a decision will be delayed until the Education Committee receives direction from the Board of Directors.
3. The Education Committee shall notify the appellant, and the Principal, of its decision in writing within seven (7) days of the meeting.
4. Requests for extensions of the timelines mentioned in the policy, will, for valid reasons, ordinarily be approved.

Complaints Involving Education Policy or Education Matters

When the complaint involves matters relating to educational policy or educational matters, such complaints, if they cannot be resolved by the Principal and the parties concerned, are to be directed to the Education Committee of the school. The Education Committee must inform the Superintendent before reaching a decision on the matter.

Appeals to the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors may consider an appeal of the Education Committee's decision for reasons that the Board considers valid and appropriate. The Board of Directors reserves the right to resolve the issue through investigation or through the formation of an appeals committee. The appellant must prepare a written submission to the Board detailing the reasons. This submission must be delivered to the Superintendent's Office no later than fourteen (14) days after the Education Committee's decision. *The decision of the Education Committee will not be overturned if school or CISVA policy and procedures were appropriately and fairly applied.*

If the decision of the Board of Directors is not acceptable, the appellant may request an Independent School Ombudsperson to review the appeal. The names and contact information of the current Independent School Ombudsperson shall be obtained from the Superintendent. The procedure and scope of the Independent School Ombudsperson's review shall be communicated to the appellant by the Superintendent. The outcome of the Independent School Ombudsperson's review shall be communicated to the appellant by the Superintendent.

The Board of Directors will communicate its final decision to all parties involved.