

## Addressing Questions or Concerns Protocol

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to building strong relationships with students, parents and the community.

HWDSB believes that questions or concerns from parents/guardians or the community, should be dealt with at the level closest to the issue in a fair, respectful and effective manner.

### ROLES:

*Trustees:* Parents/Guardians or community members may contact their area Trustee at any time. Trustees will help the communication process between the parent/guardian or community member and the appropriate staff, while providing information and direction. Trustees are able to assist by explaining the process that should be followed in resolving any questions or concerns. Trustees can also assist with directing questions or concerns to the appropriate person or step in the process (depending on the steps the parent/guardian has already undertaken to resolve the concerns at the time the Trustee is contacted). Trustees will support parents/guardians and community members in guiding them through the process.

*School Councils:* School Councils were established to advise principals on matters such as the school curriculum and code of student behaviour. They are not forums to discuss individual parent/guardian-community-teacher-student questions or concerns. Any of these matters brought to a school council member, or any school council meeting, will be referred immediately to the Principal.

### PROCEDURES:

#### **1.0 Classroom Question or Concern**

- 1.1 If the question or concern is related to something within a classroom, the item should be discussed with the classroom teacher.
- 1.2 If the item was not resolved with the classroom teacher, then the item should be raised with the school Principal.
- 1.3 If the items were not resolved satisfactorily with the Principal, then the item should be raised with the school's Superintendent of Student Achievement.
- 1.4 If the item was resolved satisfactorily with the Superintendent of Student Achievement, then the item should be raised with the office of the Director of Education.

### **2.0 School Question or Concern**

- 2.1 If the question or concern has to do with the school, or school community, the item should be discussed with the school Principal.
- 2.2 If the item was not resolved satisfactorily with the Principal, then the item should be raised with the school's Superintendent of Student Achievement.
- 2.3 If the item was not resolved satisfactorily with the Superintendent of Student Achievement, then the item should be raised with the office of the Director of Education.

### **3.0 District and Community Question or Concern**

- 3.1 If the question or concern is district wide, or has to do with HWDSB, then the item should be raised with the office of the Director of Education.

### **4.0 Representation for Parents/Guardians**

- 4.1 From time to time, a parent/guardian may believe or feel that they need support in order to adequately address their child's interests. This support may be necessary while parents/guardians are attending any meeting with HWDSB staff.
- 4.2 Parents/Guardians have the right to have a representative of their choosing in attendance at meetings with staff. Any costs/expenses associated with such representation are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- 4.3 Parents/Guardians should notify the person they are to meet with that they will have representation, in advance of a meeting.
- 4.4 A representative supporting the parents/guardians must agree, at the outset of or in advance of the meeting, to respect and maintain confidentiality of any matter discussed at a meeting between parents/guardians and staff.

### **5.0 Matters Staff will not Discuss**

- 5.1 Although the subject matter of meetings may be fairly broad, these meetings will generally either relate to the education of the parent'/guardians' student(s) at the school, or relate to something at the school or district and community level.

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- 5.2 There are certain matters that staff are unable to discuss. Such matters that normally cannot be discussed include, for example, personal details or disciplinary measures concerning other student(s) and personal matters related to staff performance issues.
- 5.3 In the event that discussion cannot be limited to the subject matter that led to the meeting, staff will bring closure to any meeting that becomes a discussion of personal details concerning other students or personal details about staff performance.