

4.8 STUDENT AND PARENT PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS AND APPEALS

Purpose:

To outline Bella Bella Community School’s policy regarding appeals and procedural fairness when dealing with issues of disagreement.

Scope:

All Board members, administrators, teachers, staff members, students, and parents.

Policy:

Handling Concerns

From time to time concerns arise and there can be confusion as to “Where to turn” for direction. Depending upon the nature of the concern there are different routes that will enable you to find solutions or answers to these concerns.

Procedure:

Curriculum/Educational Program Concerns

In the case of curriculum/educational program concerns students and parents are advised to take their questions directly to the subject teacher. Since the teacher prepares the course overview to meet the desired learning outcomes and plans the strategies to meet the objectives it is most likely that the answers can be found with the teacher. In cases where further clarification is required parents should meet with the vice-principal or principal in order to come to a successful solution to the concern.

Social/Emotional Concerns

It is possible that a student experiences stress in regards to his/her academic programs, peer pressure, and/or student-teacher relationships. In such a case it is imperative that the student bring these concerns to the attention of a teacher. It may be necessary to also include the School counselor, vice-principal or the principal. A meeting to discuss the concerns and to develop strategies is often sufficient to deal with the situation. All discussions are held in strict confidence in the pursuit of a solution to the concern.

Instructional/Teacher Concerns

When concerns regarding the quality of instruction or teacher concerns arise it is important for these concerns to be discussed with the teacher involved. In this way, perceived problems can most often be resolved. In the case where a concern persists, then involvement of the vice-principal or principal may be warranted.

Concerns Regarding Administration

If a student or parent feels that there is a concern with the vice-principal or principal, the student and/or parent is asked to bring this concern directly to the person. Should these discussions not render a resolution, a vice-principal concern may be referred to the principal and a principal concern to the School Board.

Policy Concerns

The principal, acting on behalf of the Board, is to ensure that all policies are followed at the School level. Should questions arise regarding these policies, then a student or parent should make an appointment to speak with the principal.

Appeal Procedure

In cases where students/parents feel that their questions were not clearly answered or issues not understood by a teacher, the student/parent may request a subsequent meeting with administration. If still not resolved, the student/parent may appeal in writing to the Board.

The steps outlined above would also apply to an unresolved teacher or staff member issue.

Student/Parent Appeals

A student or parent (guardian) has a right to appeal any decision or lack of decision by B.C.C.S.S. employee if they are unable to resolve the difference.

1. The Board believes the best recourse is to address differences of opinion at the level at which the original decision is made and expects every possible means will have been taken prior to initiating a formal appeal process.
2. Failing the ability of the employee and student or parent (guardian) to resolve differences, the Board will initiate, at the request of the student and/or parent (guardian) the Board level appeal process.
3. The student and/or parent (guardian) should
 - a. Discuss the concern with the employee who made the decision or failed to make a decision
 - b. If that discussion is not successful, discuss the concern with the administrator of the School
 - c. If the discussion with the administrator is not successful, initiate an appeal with the Board by completing a Notice of Appeal (Appendix D) which is also available at the school
 - d. Any student and/or parent (guardian) appealing a decision and the employee whose decision is being appealed have a right to be heard by the Board at the same time in an informal meeting to present relevant information for consideration by the Board without any concern of intimidation
 - e. Any student, parent, guardian or employee shall have the right to be accompanied by an advocate when meeting with the Board
 - f. The Board will meet in camera within ten (10) working days after they have reviewed the information and determine to
 - (i) uphold the decision
 - (ii) amend the decision
 - (iii) overturn the decision
 - g. Both parties will be informed verbally of the Board's decision within 24 hours and in writing within 7 working days of the decision being made
 - h. Directors will be expected to exclude themselves from a hearing of an appeal if they have direct first-hand knowledge of the circumstances that led to the appeal, or the Director believes that by remaining at the hearing, there would be a perception of bias on the part of the Director.

- i. A student and/or parent (guardian) may forward an appeal directly to a Chair of the Board, who on receipt of the appeal, will:
 - i. Attempt to resolve the matter
 - ii. Involve a mediator in the situation
 - iii. Refer the matter directly to the Board for its consideration the appeal will follow the process in c)
- j. Individuals who initiate an appeal to the Board will be encouraged to provide feedback on the process of the appeal by completing Appendix F, which will be provided with notification of the results of the appeal.