

Kaikoura High School



COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS PROCESS

Being proactive in providing the School community with a good process for handling concerns and complaints prevents misunderstandings. Parents, caregivers and the wider community have the right to have their concerns and complaints treated respectfully and actioned in a fair and timely way.

The School strives to:

- Provide fair and equitable procedures for handling complaints and concerns
- Ensure consistency for handling complaints and concerns by all staff and Board of Trustee members
- Ensure proper standards of integrity, conduct and concern for the dignity and rights of pupils and their parents or caregivers are observed at all times.

Notes for guidance:

- While minor issues may be able to be discussed in a quick informal chat with a staff member, normally in order for both parties to give the matter full attention, arranging a time to discuss the matter is the preferred option.
- If the concern/complaints procedure has not been followed the Board will normally return any written or verbal concern or complaint to the complainant and ask that they follow the procedure first.
- All complaints shall be documented on a Complaints Record Sheet and filed by the Principal or in the case of a complaint against the Principal filed by the Chairperson of the Board.
- All business concerning the complaint and action resulting from it will be held “in committee”.
- Complaints against staff will be handled by the Principal (or his/her delegated representative) according to the relevant CEA and principles of natural justice.
- All formal complaints against the Principal should be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees and signed by the complainant.

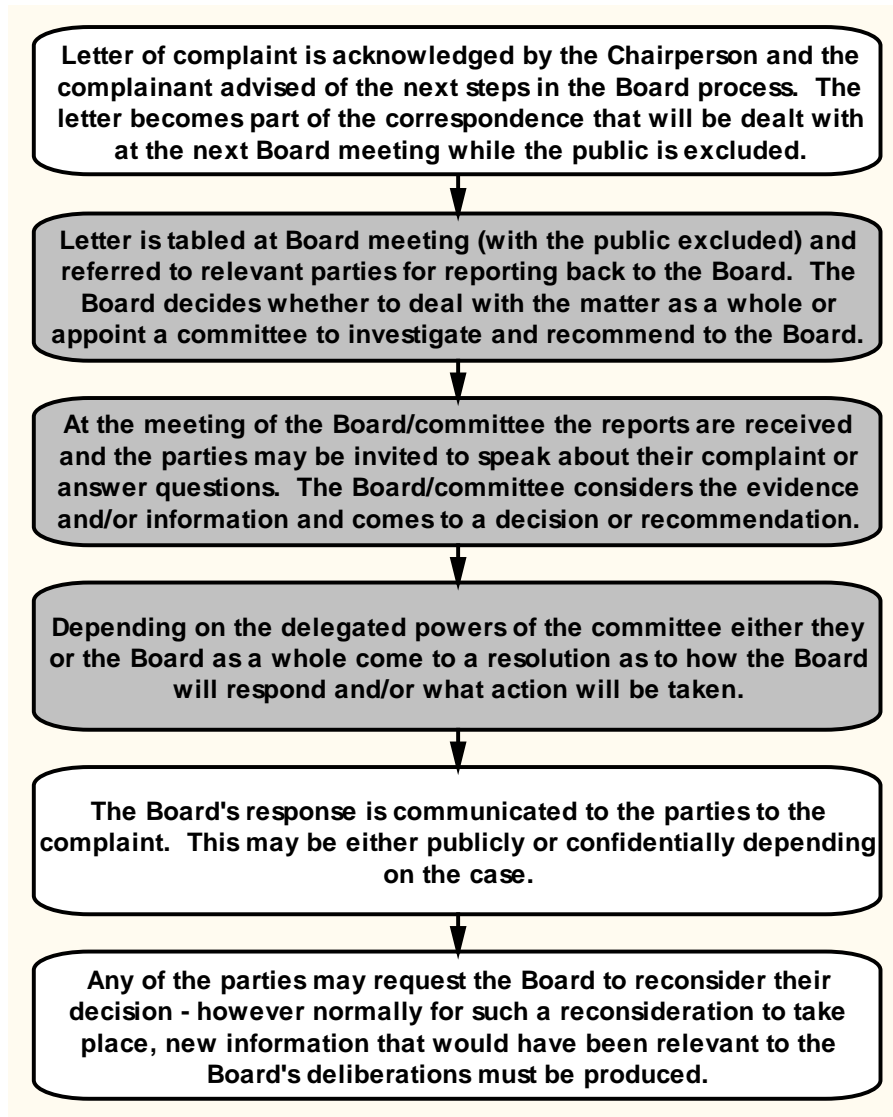
Board Process

Notes for guidance:

- The Board needs to formally receive a complaint in order to act on it. If a complaint is serious enough for the board to deal with, it is serious enough to be put in writing.
- Anyone with concerns about expressing the matter clearly in writing should seek guidance from the Board Chair, who can assist.
- All parties to a complaint may bring a support person to any meeting to which they are invited by the Board to discuss the matter.

The attached diagram shows the Board process once the complaint has been received.

STAGE 2- BOARD PROCESS



* - *shaded area denotes "public excluded meetings"*

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS PROCEDURES

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- Complaints will be dealt with according to correct procedures
- Complaints are to be handled with integrity, sincerity and understanding, following up and reporting back where necessary.
- All parties involved will be informed of the nature of the complaint as soon as possible.
- Objective discussion will be encouraged to achieve early resolution if possible.
- Complaints, which require follow-up, will be recorded by the Principal and will be available to the Board of Trustees.
- Where a complaint involves an allegation of misconduct on the part of a staff member either the Principal or the Chairperson, as appropriate, will contact NZSTA and school's insurer at an early stage.

PROCEDURES

1. Complaints by parents/caregivers should be referred directly to the staff member concerned in the first instance. Please contact the staff member concerned by phone to arrange a suitable appointment.
2. On receiving or becoming aware of complaint, the staff member may wish to have the Principal present.
3. Where complaints by parents/caregivers cannot be resolved by the staff member or the parent/caregiver feels action taken is inappropriate, then the parent/ caregiver should refer the complaint to the Principal.
4. Where the Principal is unable to resolve the complaint after discussion with the parent/ caregiver and the staff member concerned, then any of these parties may refer the matter in writing to the Board of Trustees.
5. When an initial concern is considered serious, nothing prevents the complainant lodging a complaint directly in writing to the Board, or the Principal requesting that the concern be submitted in writing to the Board.
6. Except in exceptional circumstances, the Board of Trustees will not accept any complaint unless it is in writing and a reasonable attempt has been made to resolve it with the Principal and staff member concerned.
7. All complaints to the Board of Trustees should be directed to the Board Chairperson or in their absence any other Board member.
8. All complaints in writing must be specified and signed. Where a complaint is too general, detail sufficient to enable the employee to identify the particular incident or matter will be sought.
9. The Board will refer any complaint to the Principal. Where appropriate the Principal will be asked for a report on the complaint. In all cases the response will be carefully considered by the Principal or Board of Trustees.

10. Complaints will be dealt with according to the relevant employment contract and principles of natural justice will be adhered to in dealing with any complaint.
11. The staff member(s) concerned will be advised of their right to representation.
12. All cases of serious complaint will be fully documented by the Principal or Board of Trustees.
13. Nothing prevents any part of this complaints procedure from being treated as part of a disciplinary process.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE PRINCIPAL

GUIDELINES:

- Discussion between Board Chairperson and Principal may resolve matters of concern (informal complaint)
- If a formal complaint is to be lodged it should be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees and signed by the complainant.
- The Board will acknowledge the complaint and inform the complainant of any actions taken in resolution.
- Where the Board considers that the resolution is reasonable and effective, the complainant and the Principal should be advised by the Board that no further action is intended.
- If the Board is not satisfied, the full Board or a sub-committee of the Board will follow the procedures established to implement this policy.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, the Board Chairperson should advise the complainant of further avenues e.g. Human Rights Commission, Ombudsman etc.
While formal procedures are available as a last resort, every effort should be made by all concerned to resolve the matter informally. The Chairperson of the Board has a key role in facilitating such a resolution.
- Complaints are to be handled with integrity, sincerity and understanding, following up and reporting back where necessary.

PROCEDURE:

1. All formal complaints against the Principal should be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees and signed by the complainant.
2. Copies of the letter of complaint should be given to the principal for a written response.
3. The Board will acknowledge the complaint and inform the complainant of any actions taken in resolution.
4. Where the Board considers a resolution is reasonable and effective, the complainant and the Principal should be advised by the Board that no further action is intended.
5. If the Board is not satisfied, the full Board or a sub-committee of the Board may discuss the complaint and recommend actions to the Principal. The Principal should be invited to respond to the Board's recommendations.

6. In the case of allegations, which have disciplinary implications, the Board should convene a sub-committee to investigate and report only on the substance of the complaint.
7. The sub-committee should report in writing to the Board detailing all parties consulted and the content of any written submissions. The sub-committee may offer a recommendation to the Board.
8. The Principal should be invited to respond to the report.
9. In discussion at a Board meeting of the Principal's response, the Principal may make a statement, answer questions but not be present during the discussion on action on the complaint.
10. The Principal may be represented at all meetings with the Board, or sub-committee of the Board by a professional or union advocate of his / her choice.
11. All business concerning the complaint and action resulting from it will be held 'in committee'.
12. Any member of the Board of Trustees who is personally involved in the complaint shall take no part in the discussion about it but may submit a statement on the matter. No person with any personal involvement in the complaint shall be a member of any committee of inquiry.

This policy was formally adopted by the Kaikoura High School Board of Trustees on 23 May 2016.

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Trustees