

# SPEAKING UP!

## Help for parents and students dealing with issues at school.

Sometimes our children face difficult problems or situations at school which they are unable to cope. It could be a problem with a teacher, bullying, or a rule that seems unfair.

Parents find these difficult issues to deal with, feel intimidated or fear if we speak out our child might suffer. We feel frustrated because we're not sure how to support our children in these situations, yet know we should.

Steps to follow if you have a concern:

**STEP 1:** Teacher -Try to solve the problem here. This is the person to check with on all matters pertaining to your child(ren)'s educational needs. Document details on the issues (dates, parties involved, action, correspondence).

**STEP 2:** Principal -The Principal is the educational leader and will attempt to solve the problem at the school level.

**STEP 3:** School District Directors will then be the next step to facilitate a solution to the issue.

**STEP 4:** Superintendent of Schools - The Superintendent of Schools (Dave Eberwein) is the District's CEO and is available to assist in finding a resolution if the options outlined in the previous steps have not been successful.

**STEP 5:** Trustees - Contact the Trustee(s) in your zone by phone or write a letter to the Chair of the School Board.

**STEP 6:** Formal Appeal Procedure - If your concerns are still not addressed satisfactorily, you may formally appeal a decision according to the regulations outlined in the [District's Appeal Policy](#) (Policy 16).

***You're not alone.....we can help.....***

Your Individual school Parent Advisory Councils, district Parent Advisory Council (COPACS - Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils of Saanich) and BCCPAC (B. C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils) are able to help out too.

Saanich School District parents can contact COPACS, free of charge, for information and support about who to approach with a problem and how best to try to resolve it.  
**Contact our volunteer parent advocates via email at [copacssd63@gmail.com](mailto:copacssd63@gmail.com)**

**All correspondence is completely confidential.**

**Our volunteer Advocates are available to assist you by:**

- listening to your concerns
- suggesting resources and information
- suggesting options for resolution
- helping you to develop a plan for addressing the concerns
- helping you to improve your skills so you can be more effective advocate for you child
- attend meetings with you and your child for support

**And can help you problem solve by:**

- directing you to who you should talk to
- informing you of what school district policies relate to your concerns
- explaining how the school system works
- informing you of your educational rights and responsibilities
- informing you of what options are available for addressing your concerns
- helping you effectively communicate to resolve a concern at the school
- informing of who to contact if the system doesn't work for you or your child

**The goal of Advocacy is to ensure the issue at hand is addressed, by helping parents and students to:**

- be heard
- receive fair treatment on the basis of law, policy, or procedure, and
- understand the decision made

**COPACS believes:**

- **You** are your child's best natural advocate
- **You** can make sure your child's rights, needs and opinions are respected
- **You** can make sure that decisions affecting your child are made fairly
- **You** can be your child's best advocate because no one knows your situation like you do

**Additional resources:**

- Link to BCCPAC Speaking UP! A Parent Guide to Advocating - [https://keltymentalhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/speaking\\_up\\_2008\\_0.pdf](https://keltymentalhealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/speaking_up_2008_0.pdf)
- COPACS Website [The Confederation of Parents' Advisory Councils of Saanich \(sd63.bc.ca\)](http://TheConfederationofParents'AdvisoryCouncilsofSaanich(sd63.bc.ca))
- School District 63 Appeals Policy [Policy 16 | Saanich Schools](http://Policy16|SaanichSchools)
- Link to BCCPAC Website - <https://bccpac.bc.ca/>