



POLICY 9 – BEING HEARD

PREAMBLE

Effective communication amongst all Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA) stakeholders is foundational to achieving the FFCA mission. This policy provides principles and processes by which individuals should work together within FFCA to seek clarity, offer suggestions, or resolve issues that may arise. This policy applies to all individuals involved with FFCA, including directors, employees, students, parents, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. The Board expects all relevant persons to follow the guidelines and processes outlined in this policy to address ideas or issues on the level at which they occur whenever possible.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When addressing questions, suggestions or concerns, individuals are encouraged to:

1. Focus on achieving a positive outcome. Resolving issues or reaching an agreement often includes a compromise by all people involved. The best solutions come from parents, students, and employees working together.
2. Assume that everyone has positive intentions and is doing their best.
3. Be specific; describe the problem and identify the underlying concern.
4. Be practical; make suggestions; actively seek resolution.
5. Respect everyone's right to privacy and confidentiality; questions, suggestions, and concerns should be brought up in private and not in the presence of students, parents, or employees other than those directly related to the issue.

PROCESS

The following steps should be followed when bringing forth any questions, concerns, or suggestions within FFCA:

1. Any person with a question, concern or suggestion is entitled, but not required, to communicate the issue directly to the employee(s) involved (initial contact).
 - 1.1. Contact information for campuses and central office will be posted on their website's "contact us" page.
 - 1.2. The preferred form of contact is email. All FFCA employees have an email address in the format of: Firstname.Lastname@FFCA-Calgary.com.
 - 1.3. For time-sensitive issues, the preferred form of contact is by phone to the main campus number.
2. FFCA employees must respond to questions, concerns, or suggestions within two operational school days of receiving the communication in 1. Where they are *unable* to do so for a valid reason, they shall respond as soon as is practicable.
 - 2.1. Any FFCA employee who is contacted by a parent, student or community member with a suggestion or concern about another employee will advise the person of this "Being Heard" policy and support them in following the appropriate process.
3. If a resolution is not reached through dialogue with the initial contact, then the *individual with the* question, concern, or suggestion may be directed to that employee's supervisor (follow-up contact) – *see table below*.
4. The following table identifies the initial and follow-up contacts for questions, concerns, or suggestions:

Person for which there is a question, concern, or suggestion	Initial contact	Follow-up contact (Escalation) if needed
Campus staff member	Staff member	Principal Educator
Principal Educator	Principal Educator	Superintendent / CEO
Central Office Staff Member	Staff member	Deputy Superintendent / COO OR Secretary-Treasurer / CFO
Deputy Superintendent / COO	Deputy Superintendent / COO	Superintendent / CEO
Secretary-Treasurer / CFO	Secretary-Treasurer / CFO	Superintendent / CEO
Superintendent / CEO	Superintendent / CEO	Board Chairperson
Board or Board Chairperson	Board or Board Chairperson	Superintendent / CEO <u>and</u> Board Chairperson
School Council	School Council Chair	School Council Chair <u>and</u> Principal Educator
Transportation	See the Transportation Parent Handbook, Section 8.0	
Uncertain who to contact?	Executive Assistant to the Superintendent (403-520-3206, ext. 8154).	

5. If a resolution is not reached through dialogue with the follow-up contact, the suggestion or concern may be directed, in writing, to the Deputy Superintendent / COO outlining the:
 - 5.1. nature of the question, concern, or suggestion, and
 - 5.2. previous steps taken to address the matter directly with the employee(s) involved.

APPEALS TO BOARD

If an individual has followed the process above without resolution, they may contact the Superintendent / CEO to discuss the appropriateness of lodging an appeal to the Board (Policy 13).

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE (WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION)

FFCA provides an environment in which individuals are safe to disclose wrongdoing without fear of reprisal, consistent with the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act and related regulations of the Province of Alberta. FFCA maintains a culture characterized by integrity, respect, trust, and care and expects all employees to demonstrate high ethical standards in their work. Employees should expect, in return, a positive workplace. Any employee who is aware of a situation that falls in the area of Public Interest Disclosure should refer to FFCA's [AP-G-801.1 Public Interest Disclosure](#).

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Revision Dates: June 21, 2023

References: FFCA Policy 13 Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters
FFCA Policy 18 Parental Partnership
FFCA Policy 19 Welcome Caring Respectful Safe Inclusive Learning and Working Environments
FFCA AP-G-601.1 Discrimination and Harassment
FFCA AP-G-801.1 Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection)
Province of Alberta: Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act