



MAPLE HILL SCHOOL
SUMMITTING TOGETHER

Maple Hill School

SECTION	General School Administration
POLICY NAME	Appeals Policy and Procedures
POLICY NUMBER	304
DATE CREATED	August 30, 2017
DATE REVISED	
DATE IMPLEMENTED	September 1, 2017

Preamble:

Natural justice allows a parent/guardian and/or student to appeal a decision that has a significant effect on the education, health or safety of their child. This policy details the process that parents/guardians should follow in exercising their right of appeal.

Policy:

Maple Hill School will provide parents/guardians/students the opportunity to appeal any decision that was made resulting in a significant negative effect on their education, health or safety. In order to provide a fair appeal, this policy outlines the requirements, timelines and processes to be followed when undertaking an appeal.

Implementation:

Necessary Grounds for Appeal:

The school may refuse to hear an appeal where:

- The appellant has not first discussed the decision being appealed with those staff members directly involved in the decision.
- The school determines that the decision does not significantly affect the student's education, health or safety.
- The appeal has not been initiated within the stated timelines from the event.

Before an appeal is filed, the student and/or parent must discuss the dispute issue in a constructive manner with those responsible for the decision. In other words, the student and/or parent must discuss the issue with the teacher if the decision was made at the classroom level, or the principal, if the decision was made at the administration level.

Time Limit for Filing Appeal:

An appeal must be commenced within seven (7) days of the date the student or parent was informed of the effecting decision.

Filing an Appeal:

An appeal shall be initiated by filing a notice of appeal in writing with the Principal. Where the appellant is a student under the age of nineteen (19) years, the school shall provide a copy of the notice of appeal to the parent(s) of the student.

The notice of appeal shall include:

- necessary information such as: name of parent, address, email address (if applicable), and telephone number, including the student's name, grade level, and involved staff member(s).
- description of the decision that is being appealed illustrating its significant effect on the education, health or safety of the student
- name of the employee who made the decision
- date they were informed of the decision to be appealed
- grounds of the appeal and the action requested
- steps taken to discuss the matter directly with the person who made the decision or with other school employees.

Procedures of the Hearing

The Principal shall advise the parent and the employee whose decision is being appealed, whether the appeal will be determined based upon written submissions and/or an oral hearing. Other details or instructions established for the hearing of the appeal, including the time frame for oral and/or written submissions, date, time and location of the hearing will also be communicated to the appellant and defendant. Oral hearings will be held in a closed session.

A decision must be made and conveyed in writing within seven (7) days from the date of the hearing. The Board shall promptly notify the appellants and defendants of the results of the appeal and will provide each with a copy of report.

Stage 1:

1. The student or parent discusses in a constructive manner the decision with the primary decision maker: the teacher, staff or principal who made the decision.
2. The primary decision maker will review their decision in light of any new information that was presented.
3. A decision is made to uphold the decision, modify the decision, or rescind the original decision, with a report to the student or parent regarding the reasons for the new decision.

Stage 2:

If the parent or student is unsatisfied with the decision made in Stage 1, they may escalate to the principal (or head of school in the case that the first decision maker was the principal). In the case of a suspension, the process will begin at Stage 2 automatically.

1. The principal or head of school will receive the necessary information from both the staff involved and the parent/student; i.e. the stakeholders.
2. The principal will review the decision and the measures taken in reference to school policy, age of student, and discipline history of the student. All stakeholders (especially the student) will be given an opportunity to respond to the information collected in the first phase.
3. The principal will decide to uphold the decision or appeal it, providing a written report to all stakeholders and the reasons for the new decision.

Stage 3:

If the parent/student is still unhappy with the new decision, they may then escalate the appeals in writing to the Board. Any suspensions in excess of three days will automatically be reviewed by the Board, which includes the principal, the head of school and other members of the Board of Directors.

1. This will begin with first collecting information in writing from the stakeholders.
2. This stage has a summary hearing where it will be decided if a full hearing is required. Reasons for denying a full hearing are:
 - The parent/student filed the appeal too late, (more than 30 days after last decision)
 - The measure taken did not significantly affect the education of the student, OR
 - The summary hearing is decided in favour of the student/parent.
3. At the full hearing, all stakeholders will be given an opportunity to respond to the information collected in this review. Any decisions made at the summary hearing or full hearing will be communicated in full and in writing to all stakeholders. This is the highest level of appeals within the school.
4. Either party may choose to escalate the result of the appeal to the independent school Ombudsperson who may choose to hear/not hear the case

The Major Complaints Policy #306 aligns with this policy and should be referenced when dealing with major complaints.

FISA Ombudsperson

Parents and students have the right to make a complaint with an ombudsperson in order to resolve a matter. Maple Hill School is a member of the Federation of Independent Schools Association (FISA BC), specifically the Associate Members Society (AMS). As a member of the AMS of FISA BC, Maple Hill School students and parents can contact an ombudsperson to file a complaint. The names and contact information for the ombudspersons will be provided to the students and parents and the fees of the ombudsperson will be paid for by Maple Hill School.