



## **OFIS Grievance Resolution Policy**

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**Policy** – It is the policy of OFIS to hear the concerns of and regarding its member schools, employees and volunteers, and particularly with respect to adherence to OFIS membership criteria as established in the OFIS Core Values. All member schools, employees, and volunteers of OFIS should have and use an established means of expressing frustration, disagreement or concern that is appropriate, acceptable, and allows for a fair hearing. Further, it is the policy of OFIS to encourage direct and open communication between parties with any complaint or dispute to resolve it.

**Procedure** - All concerns should be well-documented and forwarded to the OFIS Executive Director who will keep files, designate investigating teams if necessary, and bring said concerns to the attention of the Board of Directors during regular Board Meetings. Concerns regarding the Executive Director should be brought directly to the Chair of OFIS' Board of Directors.

Should a concern be brought against a member school, employee or volunteer of OFIS, and the concerned party requires action by OFIS, the following procedure should be followed:

1. The concern must be submitted in writing and should be forwarded to the Board of Directors and the concern's receipt must be documented in the Board Minutes.
2. The Executive Director and two members of the Board of Directors will collect and collate all necessary statements, evidence and school information, including contacting all stakeholders for further statements. If the concern is in respect to the Executive Director, the Executive of the Board of Directors will collect and collate all necessary statements, evidence and information, including contacting all stakeholders for further statements.
3. Upon completing the file on the complaint, it shall be presented to the Board for a decision and agreement upon recommendations to be given to the party of concern. OFIS does not share these reports with complainants but may prepare a summary of the procedure to forward to complainants.
4. The Executive Director or the Chair of the Board as appropriate, on behalf of the OFIS Board, should present the decision and recommendations to the member school, employee or volunteer both verbally and in writing.

There may be instances where a complaint may be made but the concerned party refuses or is unable to put the complaint in writing. They should be strongly urged to formalize the complaint otherwise the Board cannot be involved.

Serious offences, which include allegations of child abuse or criminal activities, are not within the jurisdiction of the OFIS Board of Directors. Should OFIS become aware of any such allegations, its officers are obligated to report such allegations to the appropriate authorities and will do so. OFIS will also advise schools of their civic and legal duties to report such concerns for investigation by the mandated authority.

On conclusion of any legal investigation by appropriate authorities or upon failure to resolve areas of recommendation made by OFIS during the grievance resolution procedure, the Board of Directors of OFIS may decide to:

- a) mandate assistance in remediating the original concern and in the case of a member school
- b) mandate the completion of an OFIS School Management Review (to be undertaken at the school's expense)
- c) place a school on probation pending successful completion of OFIS recommendations
- d) remove a school from OFIS membership

Information, recommendations and decisions about the on-going membership status of a school must be brought in writing to a meeting of the OFIS Board of Directors where there is a quorum present for endorsement. Once endorsed, the decision and its particulars will be presented to the school both verbally and in writing.

Member schools, employees or volunteers that disagree with the OFIS Board's decision and/or findings may appeal those decisions with the OFIS Board by filing fresh information and evidence in writing 30 days prior to the next OFIS scheduled OFIS Board Meeting.

OFIS will offer to assist in the mediation of disagreements as an objective third party but only in the absence of legal proceedings. If legal representation is engaged by any party to the dispute, OFIS will remove itself and hand over any files to the member school or individual. Member schools are advised that all information provided to OFIS can become publicly accessible through any subsequent court proceedings.