

## When **Conflict Arises:** *Communication Between Home and School*

“Every person is valued and all individuals, including staff, pupils and parents are treated with respect and treat others with respect.”

“Adults and pupils in the public school system have the right to work and to learn in a safe, orderly, productive, respectful and harassment-free environment.”

The following behaviours by any person will not be tolerated in the New Brunswick public school system...creating or attempting to create a disturbance, using threatening or abusive language, and speaking or acting in such a way as to impair the maintenance of order and discipline on school property.

*(Policy 703 – Education NB 1999)*

## Roles of Parents

(13)1 In support of the learning success of his or her child and the learning environment at the school, a parent is expected to

- (a) encourage his or her child to attend to assigned homework,
- (b) communicate reasonably with school personnel employed at the school his or her child attends as required in the best interest of the child,
- (c) cause his or her child to attend school as required by this Act,
- (d) ensure the basic needs of his or her child are met, and
- (e) have due care for the conduct of his or her child at school and while on the way to and from school.

(13)2 The parent of a pupil has a right to reasonable consultation with the pupil’s teacher or the principal of the school the pupil attends with respect to the education of the pupil.

(13)3 It is the responsibility of the parent of a pupil and of school personnel to conduct themselves in a respectful manner and to follow established procedures when involved in communications concerning the pupil.

*Source: NB Education Act*

## How Should Parents Arrange a School Visitation?

With the large number of students and adults currently involved in classrooms, great care is taken to ensure there is a minimum of disruption in the learning environment. For this reason, it is not always convenient or appropriate to have visitors in the classroom. However, teachers welcome planned visits from interested parents. As in any professional workplace, it is expected that a parent wishing to visit a class for a short period of time will arrange an appointment with the school administration and the classroom teacher involved. Normally, classroom visits would be scheduled with a reasonable time limit for the visit. Parents wishing to visit a classroom should contact the principal and teacher involved for further information.

## When Disagreement Occurs

It is possible in any system, like education, involving hundreds of thousands of interactions daily, that some of these contacts will lead to misunderstandings or disagreements. On those relatively few occasions when a misunderstanding or disagreement occurs between the school system and a parent, it is essential for the well-being of all concerned, especially the student involved, that the adults reach a resolution as quickly and reasonably as possible. Since it is possible for either party to feel offended in these disputes, both must feel comfortable that they have a process to bring the dispute to resolution.

**When a question, concern or complaint arises, the following steps must be followed to ensure fairness to all involved:**

1. Talk or meet with the person directly involved in an attempt to resolve the concern or get an explanation.
2. If there is no satisfactory resolution, you may decide to proceed to the next step.

**If you are a parent:**

3. Complaints or concerns from a parent regarding a teacher or administrator should be processed in the following manner:

Complainant meets with (or talks to): 1) teacher, 2) principal and teacher, 3) appropriate District Office Personnel, or as a final level of appeal, 4) the Superintendent.

**If the concern is with the school overall, the parent should meet with the principal and if resolution is not satisfactory, meet with the principal and superintendent.**

**Parents and teachers must work together.**



## If you are a teacher:

4. Complaints or concerns regarding a parent should be processed in the following manner:

Complainant meets with (or talks to): 1) parent, 2) parent and principal, 3) the Superintendent.

**In some situations, the teacher and/or principal involved may wish to communicate with the NBTA/NBTF to seek advice and guidance in the matter.**

## Other Considerations

The strength of the school system and its impact on students is greatest when influences at home and at school work in harmony to achieve the results for students. However, in rare occasions, the confrontation leads to disputes which may require other interventions such as initiating procedures under the *Petty Trespass Act*, calling police for their assistance, or launching a civil suit.

**Obviously, it is in the best interest of all concerned to try and minimize the escalation of confrontation by respecting the roles of informal communication, and problem solving.**



## Parents and Schools Roles and Responsibilities

### Introduction

Millions of interactions occur each year in our school system. Parents, teachers, students and others communicate with each other, cooperatively make decisions, and generally strive to improve the service to students. This brochure is intended to provide the basis on which these interactions occur, and to establish procedures to follow in those few instances where the interactions have a negative impact on the efficient and productive operation of a school or classroom.

### How Can Parents Assist?

Parents play a vital role in developing positive school habits in students. Students, especially those having difficulty socially or academically, require stability in their lives and consistency in the messages they receive from parents and from teachers.

Parents can contribute by expressing a genuine interest in the activities of their children, particularly as they relate to school.

### The following are just a few suggestions for parents to consider:

1. **Show interest** and concern in your child's efforts and achievements.
2. **Encourage** proper study habits by providing a quiet area to study, and a consistent opportunity or schedule for school responsibilities.
3. **Refrain** from making negative comments about schools and teachers in the presence of students, or for that matter, in the presence of other adults. Concerns should be addressed following procedures outlined elsewhere in this brochure.

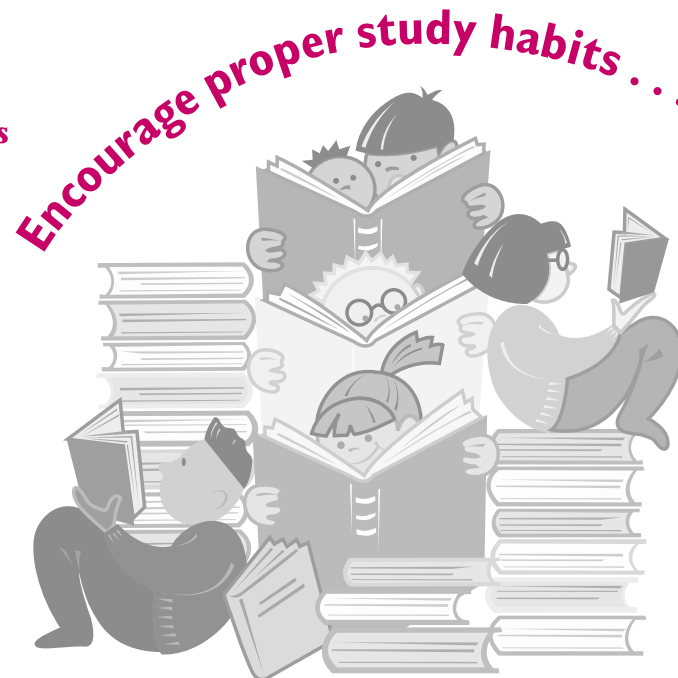
4. As much as possible, **show support** for the school by participating in the Parent School Support Council (PSSC), Home and School, as a volunteer, or by attendance at school functions such as parent-teacher conferences.

### Conclusion

The purpose of the school system is to provide students with a learning environment in which each can succeed to his/ her maximum potential without concern for unnecessary disruption. Parents and teachers together must encourage each student to develop positive attitudes and work habits, and to respect the rights and responsibilities of all.

The information outlined above is intended to foster a strong positive working relationship between parents and teachers, and to provide resolutions should difficulties arise.

**The end result must always be a supportive and positive learning environment for all in the classroom.**



**Your child, our student** will gain maximum benefit if we can find ways to ensure the relationship between home and school is positive. It is important, therefore, that both the influences at home and the communication at school encourage a **positive attitude** in the student toward school, fellow students, and school personnel.



A **safe, pleasant, and productive learning environment** for all students is the objective to which we all aspire.

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