

401.11AP – Communications with Public by Staff

Purpose

To set expectations for Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) staff in responding to questions and concerns raised by NLPS students, parents and guardians and the broader community.

Definitions

Appeal – A process under 502.2AP Appeals under the School Act that a parent or guardian appeals a decision of NLPS staff

Carbon Copy or CC – The use by a sender in an email or letter of the “CC” function to copy a second NLPS Staff member without directing the Communication directly to them

Communication – Any letter, telephone call, email or text (where the staff member allows for this manner of communication) by a member of the NLPS community directed to a staff member of NLPS

Complaint – A specific concern for which 502.1AP–Addressing-Parent-Complaints applies

NLPS Staff – An employee of NLPS, including a contractor when engaged by NLPS

Reasonable Period of Time – The period of time in which a Communication should be responded to, including the sending of an acknowledgement of receipt. When school is in session such response should occur within 3 business days. It is not expected that NLPS Staff on holidays (e.g. Winter, Spring and Summer breaks) are responsive unless they are active during these periods.

Social Media Communication – A communication, including questions and comments raised on a social media platform supported by NLPS such as Twitter and Facebook

Vendor – An external person, group or company that is seeking business or other similar opportunities with the District

Guidelines

Receiving A Communication

1. When a Communication is received by NLPS Staff they should review to determine if they are the appropriate responder.
2. If the NLPS Staff that receives the concern is in the best position to respond, they should proceed to do so within the Reasonable Period of Time.

401.11AP – Communications with Public by Staff

3. If the NLPS Staff member will require additional time to provide information, they are required to respond to the sender acknowledging receipt of the Communication.
4. If the NLPS Staff member is not the appropriate person to respond within a Reasonable Period of Time to the Communication, they should respond to the sender and CC the appropriate NLPS Staff member with a copy of the initial correspondence.

When this Administrative Procedure (AP) Does not Apply

1. Where there is a specific complaint, the requirements of [502.1AP Addressing Parent Complaints](#) should be followed. This may include encouraging the complainant to communicate with the NLPS Staff most closely associated with the concern.
2. Where the Communication is an Appeal under [502.2AP Appeals under the School Act](#), the NLPS Staff should respond and share 502.2AP with the sender.
3. NLPS Staff are not required to respond to a Vendor. Specific NLPS staff should be aware of the requirements of the [Lobbyists Transparency Act](#)
4. Where an individual makes a request under the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) ("FIPPA"), [305.5AP FIPPA Designation of Head](#) and the timelines therein apply.
5. Comments and questions received on social media do not fall under this AP. While the District will strive to respond, due to the volume it cannot guarantee response when concerns or questions are raised in this venue.
6. When a Communication is received by NLPS Staff for the Board of Education, [Policy 209 Board Meeting Procedures \(3.3\)](#) will apply.
7. Where an NLPS Staff member is Carbon Copied on a Communication they are not obligated to respond.

Requirements of NLPS Staff

1. When NLPS Staff are on breaks or holidays the Reasonable Period of Time does not apply. However, all NLPS Staff on break or holidays must ensure that they apply an out of office message on their email account and applicable phones.
2. NLPS Staff must be courteous in their response to individuals.

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