



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

ANNUAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION DEPARTMENT REPORT

“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.” Matthew 18:15

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INFORMATION REPORT

Vision:

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Mission:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.



R. McGuckin
 Associate Director of Academic Affairs

A. Sangiorgio
 Associate Director of Planning and Facilities

C. Jackson
 Executive Superintendent of Business Services and Chief Financial Officer

Angela Gauthier
 Director of Education

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report summarizes the Conflict Resolution Department data, services and initiatives from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

B. PURPOSE

1. To provide an overview of the Conflict Resolution Department tasks and services concerning the differentiated support offered to TCDSB stakeholders from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

C. BACKGROUND

1. **April 2014-** The Student Achievement and Wellbeing, Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee requested that an annual report be presented to the Board of Trustees.
2. **October 9, 2014** – The Board received a report outlining the services and the policies that guide the Conflict Resolution department, including the Conflict Resolution Department brochure that was provided to the entire TCDSB community.
3. During the **2014-2015** academic year, the Board’s policy, H.M. 14 Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace, as well as the Operational Procedures known as The Respectful Workplace document, were revised given recent legislative requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Consultation with all union groups was achieved through email as well as meetings with the respective Joint Occupational Health and Safety committees. The revised policy was amended and passed by the Board of Trustees on **August 25, 2016**.
4. At the **June 4, 2015** Board meeting the Trustees passed a motion requesting that the Annual Report of the Conflict Resolution Department be supplemented to include the following information:
 - i. *A summary of the types of complaints/inquiries;*
 - ii. *That the report identify any patterns which indicate either systemic issues for the Director to action or policy issues which the Board should review;*

- iii. *That it provide a summary of direct feedback via surveys completed by individuals who have contacted the department regarding the effectiveness, fairness and privacy of the Conflict Resolution Department;*
 - iv. *That the above be provided as part of the annual report presented by the Conflict Resolution Department to the Student Achievement and Well Being Committee moving forward.*
5. **November 24, 2014**-The department launched an educative podcast about H.M. 14. on the TCDSB portal and website. The goal was to raise awareness of the policy and the services provided by the Conflict Resolution Department.
 6. **May 2016**- Due to budget reductions, the Supervisor of Conflict Resolution was eliminated resulting in a reduction in staffing. The Coordinator of Conflict Resolution has received some administrative support from the Supervisor Legal Support.
 7. **March-2017**-A new podcast related to H.M. 14 was launched.
 8. **April 28, 2017**- All employees are required to acknowledge agreement to having viewed the podcast on the Board's Intranet site. Alternatively, employees can navigate to: <https://intranet.tcdsb.org/HM14video>

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. On a regular basis, the Conflict Resolution Department continues to receive inquiries/consults/referrals from TCDSB staff members, school administrators, management staff, union representatives and parents.
2. The majority of inquiries/complaints from parents are resolved through consultations, CSPC in-services and facilitated meetings.
3. The following is a summary of inquiries that involved TCDSB employees:
 - i. Gossip and innuendo (breaches of H.M.30 Complaint Against a Staff Member);
 - ii. Conflicts regarding professional roles and responsibilities (e.g Teacher/ Designated Early Childhood Educators);
 - iii. Personality conflicts and behaviours that were viewed as harassment; and
 - iv. The exercise of supervisory responsibilities being viewed as harassment.

4. The following is a summary of conflicts that involved non-TCDSB employees:
- i. Alleged harassment involving parents who are also board employees;
 - ii. CSPC related issues;
 - iii. Dissatisfaction regarding the development and/or student-related programming, (i.e. IEP, custody/access related issues, safety plans, etc).
 - iv. A total of 59 facilitation meetings were conducted during this recording period. The majority of the facilitation meetings involved personality conflicts, confusion about professional roles, and allegations of harassment. Most of the facilitation meetings were between staff members, some included parents, or parents and staff members.
 - v. In addition, a total of 49 additional staff in-services and/or individual training sessions regarding HM 14 were conducted. Most sessions were held for newly hired employees, and some training sessions were for particular schools where repeated breaches of the policy were noted despite staff viewing the podcast in a previous staff meeting. One-to-one sensitivity sessions for specific staff were conducted as a condition related to discipline issued by management in regards to breaches of the policy.
 - vi. A total of 4 formal investigations were conducted by external investigators in relation to harassment and/or discrimination formal complaints filed under H.M 14. The approximate cost of the four external investigations was \$40,000.

The following is a summary of the formal investigations and the total number of billable hours required to complete the investigations by the external investigators:

- a) Parent filed formal complaint against an employee. The total number of hours to complete the investigation: 85hours
- b) Poisoned work environment investigation. The total number of hours to complete the investigation: 40 hours
- c) Formal complaint of harassment filed against Administrator. The total number of hours to complete the investigation: 50 hours
- d) Formal complaint against Administrator regarding allegations of Occupational Health and Safety and collective agreement breaches. The total number of hours to complete the investigation: 65 hours

- vii. Upon completion of the external investigations, all recommendations were reviewed and appropriate actions were taken by the Board staff.
5. In the past, the Conflict Resolution Department sought feedback regarding facilitating resolution to a conflict. Formal surveys were not considered due to confidentiality concerns voiced by users.
6. As per the Board's direction, a survey was developed in conjunction with the Research Department to gather information related to:
 - users of the services;
 - nature of the conflict;
 - level of satisfaction with the interaction;
 - any additional comments.
7. The Survey Monkey program allowed for 100 free confidential questionnaires to be distributed to the various stakeholders who had been involved with the department. Due to recent budget cuts, the department did not have an identified funding source to allow for additional surveys to be distributed. It is worth noting that several stakeholders who were sent the survey were reluctant and/or unwilling to provide feedback due to their concern regarding breaches of confidentiality. A full analysis of the findings is attached. **(Appendix A)**
8. Overall, the results of the survey were favorable. In the category of Fairness, **95.35%** of survey participants were very satisfied or satisfied overall.
9. In the category of Effectiveness, **90.36%** of survey participants were very satisfied or satisfied overall.
10. In the category of Privacy, **95.55%** of survey participants were very satisfied or satisfied overall.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. The Conflict Resolution Department requests to move the annual report to the August meeting to better capture a full academic year of data (e.g. September-June). The current reporting period occurs at the busiest time of year for the Department, making it extremely difficult to balance the responsibilities of generating the report and continuing to provide timely service to our stakeholders.

2. As part of the cyclical policy review/revision process at TCDSB, the H.M.14 Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace policy will be reviewed and revised to reflect current practices and legislative changes.

The Coordinator of Conflict Resolution has already attended or is scheduled to attend the Joint Health and Safety Committees as part of the annual review process.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.