

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 572 INTERVIEWING STUDENTS IN EMPLOYEE MISCONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS – EXTERNAL INVESTIGATOR

Purpose

To ensure that any interview of a Chilliwack School District (“District”) student conducted as part of an employee-related investigation, when the investigator is not the student’s school principal, is culturally appropriate, child-centered, trauma-informed, and respectful of student and family rights.

Scope

This Administrative Procedure (“Procedure”) applies when District students are interviewed as witnesses in an investigation of alleged employee misconduct when the investigator is not their school principal. External investigators could be District staff or third-party consultants (including lawyers).

Guiding Principles

- **Child-Centred and Trauma-Informed:** Students’ well-being is paramount. Processes will minimize harm and ensure safety and dignity.
- **Cultural Safety:** The District is committed to ensuring this procedure reflects culturally appropriate practices, particularly in relation to Indigenous students, families, and communities. See [Indigenous Cultural Safety, Humility, and Competency Guide](#).
- **Consent and Transparency:** Parents/guardians (or mature students where applicable) must understand the process and provide informed consent.
- **Support:** Students are entitled to have a parent or support person present.
- **Clarity:** Students and parents/guardians will be given clear, plain-language information about the interview.

Procedure

If a student is identified as a witness in an employee misconduct investigation and will be requested to attend an interview with an external investigator, the following procedures must be adhered to by all District staff in order to ensure student safety and well-being:

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1. Necessity Test

Before a student interview is arranged, Human Resources (“HR”) (in consultation with the Principal or investigator) must determine that interviewing the student is necessary to the investigation and that the information cannot reasonably be obtained by other means.

- The rationale for interviewing the student must be documented and retained in the investigation file.

2. Consent

District staff must obtain written consent from parents/guardians (or from a mature student) before a student participates in an investigation interview or is contacted by an external investigator, either HR or a third-party investigator.

- Consent must be documented and forwarded to HR to be retained in the investigation file.
- Where consent is declined, HR will consult with the Superintendent’s Office to determine next steps.

3. Pre-Interview Communication

When obtaining consent, District staff must advise parents/guardians (and students, as appropriate) of:

- The context and purpose of the interview.
- Confidentiality and privacy obligations, and their limits.
- The student’s right to have a parent or support person present.
- The student’s right to discuss the interview with their parent/guardian afterwards.
- How to ask questions or raise concerns, both before and after the interview, and who to contact.
- That in some cases, the interview may be conducted by a lawyer or external investigator.

4. Conduct of Interview

Interviews must be conducted in a manner that prioritizes the student’s comfort and safety. Specifically:

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- Trauma-informed approaches must be used (e.g., neutral setting, developmentally appropriate language, avoiding leading questions).
- The investigator will record who is present, confirm consent, and ensure supports are in place.
- The investigator will ensure the student is aware that they can pause or stop the interview at any time.
- The investigator will explain why they are gathering information from the student and how the information will be used.

5. Documentation

All consent forms, communication records, and interview notes must be retained by HR in accordance with District record-keeping and privacy requirements.

- Records must be stored securely in the HR investigation file and must not be placed in the student's educational file.
- Access to investigation records is restricted to those with a demonstrated need to know.

6. Follow-Up and Supports

District staff should advise students and parents/guardians of available supports (e.g., counselling, Indigenous support workers, community resources).

Principals will ensure that any immediate needs related to student well-being are addressed following the interview. Principals will follow up with the parents/guardians within 48 hours to confirm the student's well-being, if necessary.

Special Considerations

- Allegations involving criminal conduct, child protection, or discrimination may trigger mandatory reporting obligations and require involvement of external authorities.
- In some cases, the student or parent/guardian may be contacted by the employee's regulatory body in the future regarding the matter for which they were interviewed.

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Roles and Responsibilities

Human Resources (“HR”)

- Determine, in consultation with the Principal, whether interviewing a student is necessary and document the rationale.
- Ensure consent documentation, communication records, and interview notes are retained securely and in compliance with privacy legislation.
- Consult with the Superintendent’s Office when student consent is declined or other complexities arise.

Principal (or Vice Principal)

- Coordinate the consent process and ensure parents/guardians (or mature students) receive clear, plain-language information about the interview.
- Clearly communicate the student’s rights, including the option to have a parent or support person present.
- Arrange a neutral, private, and safe environment for the interview that minimizes disruption to the student’s learning.
- Ensure the student is supported before, during, and after the interview and is aware they can pause or stop the process at any time.
- Follow up with the student immediately after the interview to assess their well-being and connect them to appropriate supports.
- Contact parents/guardians within 48 hours to check on well-being and share available resources if necessary.
- Forward all consent forms and communication records to HR for secure retention.
- Fulfill mandatory reporting obligations under the Child, Family and Community Service Act if information suggests risk of harm to the student.

Investigator (External)

- Conduct the interview using trauma-informed and culturally safe approaches, using developmentally appropriate language.
- Confirm that consent has been obtained and supports are in place prior to the interview.

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- Clearly inform the student that they can pause or end the interview at any time.
- Record details of the interview, including participants and supports provided, and submit those records to HR.

Reference

- [Administrative Procedure 570](#): Investigations into Alleged Employee Misconduct
- [Administrative Procedure 571](#): Interviewing Students in Employee Misconduct Investigations – School Principal