Parents everywhere have questions about homework assignments, curriculum, student safety, school rules and policies and there are many avenues available for parents to communicate with schools.

Parents can communicate with schools and teachers through, phone calls, emails, student planners and visiting the school in person. Parents can receive information via the school or school district website, school newsletters and school and PAC bulletin boards.

There are also several resources for parents who have difficulty or need help to communicate with the school or their child's teacher. Parents can call or email the District Parent Advisory Council for assistance 250-564-3722 email dpac@sd57dpac.ca or contact the BCCPAC Advocacy phone line at 1-888-351-9834

Parent Concerns: A Guide for Resolution

From time to time as a parent you may have a query or worry about an aspect of your child's schooling. The following model represents some of the best practices for handling complaints fairly and respectfully.

Steps to follow

(Adapted from A Guide for Parents produced by the Sooke Parents' Education Advisory Council)

Where do I start if I have a concern or problem?

Always start with the teacher. A face-to-face meeting between teacher, parent, and student may be the best approach. Most problems will be successfully solved at this level.

Where do I go next?

If for some reason the concern cannot be resolved by discussing it with the teacher, the vice-principal or principal will make every attempt to solve the problem at the school level and can help you contact appropriate people as necessary.

What if my problem cannot be solved at the school level?

You may wish to call an assistant superintendent of the school district. If you are unable to achieve satisfaction, referral to the superintendent may be necessary.

Where would I go from there?

You have the option of writing a letter to the school board or asking to make a formal presentation at a board meeting.

Would it be appropriate for me to ask the PAC to intervene on my behalf?

No. It is important to be fair to yourself and to the parties involved. Action on your own behalf allows you to take ownership of your problem and follow it through. The problem cannot be dealt with legally or ethically if it is presented anonymously. You can ask your PAC or DPAC for information and resources to assist with the process or you can e-mail or call the BCCPAC Parent Advocacy Project for assistance (www.bccpac.bc.ca/advocacy/Advocacy-Main.htm). Call toll free1-888-351-9834

Everyone benefits when parents know how they can raise concerns or lodge a formal complaint. School boards should ensure the complaint procedures are accessible and well publicized.