

## Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment

If as a Teacher Candidate you believe you are the subject of bullying, discrimination, or harassment at the hands of an Associate Teacher, you should attempt to resolve the matter *confidentially* and *informally*:

- discuss the matter with a Practicum Consultant;
- do *not* discuss the matter with other teachers or Teacher Candidates.

Depending on the severity and nature of your concern, your Practicum Consultant may encourage you to attempt to resolve the matter directly and privately with your Associate Teacher. If you are uncomfortable doing so, your Practicum Consultant *may immediately terminate* the practicum placement *without prejudice* to either you or your Associate Teacher.

Whether or not the practicum placement is terminated, your Practicum Consultant:

- *must alert the Associate Teacher* to your concern;
- *must propose a meeting with the Associate Teacher with Federation support* to mediate the situation, if the Associate Teacher wishes to do so.

If the matter is not resolved through these informal procedures, you as a Teacher Candidate may pursue the matter more formally by reporting your concern to the School Principal who will then invoke the board's harassment policy. If you proceed in this manner, you must provide the Associate Teacher with a written statement of your complaint within three days of your reporting it to the Principal—see OTF Guidelines Regarding Harassment Complaints That Arise During Practicum Placements, 2008, p. 1.

<http://www.osstf27.ca/docs/HarassmentGuidelines.pdf>

### **OTF Guidelines Regarding Harassment Complaints That Arise During Practicum Placements**

There are many intricacies and complexities inherent in the teacher candidate - associate teacher relationship. With regard to the specific question of harassment, the following realities must be considered:

- Concerns identified may range from personality clashes to bad behaviour to harassment under the Human Rights Code.
- The overlap of responsibilities and the application of appropriate policies and legislation can be challenging. A number of policies potentially apply in claims of harassment, including the school board's harassment policies, OTF and Affiliate bylaws and policies on harassment, the university's harassment policy and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- This is the transition from a "student to teacher" relationship to a "professional to professional" relationship.
- As associate members of the Federation, teacher candidates are subject to the exact same responsibilities as full members of the Federation, although they do not have all the same rights. This means that they are subject to the same member to member duties, as stipulated in the Regulation made under the Teaching Profession Act. In particular, when making an adverse report about a fellow member, they are required under clause 18.1.b to furnish the member with a written statement of the report within three days.

In attempting to resolve accusations of harassment, it is important to consider the above realities. In the context of a professional relationship, it is incumbent upon the faculties, OTF, and the Affiliates to provide support to resolve the issues in a collegial manner. (2008, p. 1)