



Advocate Agreement

The purpose of this agreement is to establish the norms for collaboration and to clarify the role of advocates in NLPS schools, allowing for open communication and meaningful collaboration.

Advocates in public education typically support a parent who requires support in advocating for their child(ren)'s needs in school. School teams bring expertise on curriculum, educational programming, and knowledge of the interaction of the student in the school setting; families bring an in-depth understanding of the needs of their children.

Advocates assist the parent(s) by helping them to:

- Understand the decision-making processes in a school or school district;
- Prepare for meetings;
- Keep emotions in check at meetings
- Maintain a respectful relationship with the school staff, and
- Take notes and organize important information.

While advocates are generally welcomed in schools, the school has the right to refuse the participation of an advocate who does not adhere to the guidelines outlined below.

This agreement does not include arrangements or procedures governing parent volunteers in schools.

Collaboration Norms:

- School principals are responsible for obtaining the signed agreement from parents and advocates.
- Meetings must be prearranged through the school principal and/or case manager, in consultation with the parent, classroom teacher and other relevant staff.
- Advocates are a support for the parent but should not speak for a parent who is not contributing to the dialogue.
- Telephone, written or electronic correspondence will be directed to parents.
- The advocate will refrain from communicating independently with NLPS staff or requesting documentation. This is the parent's responsibility and cannot be delegated to an advocate.
- Where advocates are supporting families within a school community where their children attend, they must maintain a clear boundary between their advocacy for an individual student and their family, and the role they play as parent to their own children. The school has the right to deny the participation of an advocate where the relationship with the advocate or family is impacted because of a conflict of interest.
- Dialogue will focus on the student or issue at hand. Parties are asked not to discuss other students or their circumstances.
- Advocates will adhere to the expectations as outlined in NLPS Admin Procedure 425 (Bullying and Harassment).
- The parent and advocate have signed and adhere to the Confidentiality Declaration (on reverse).

I have read and agree to the above roles, responsibilities and guidelines.

Student Name:

DOB:

Parent Name:

Signature:

Advocate Name:

Signature:

School Name:

Date:

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *School Act*, the school district must protect the confidentiality of personal information of students and families. All participants at any school meetings are required to respect the confidential nature of all discussions as well as respect the confidentiality of personal student or family information gained through such a meeting or through general access in the school.



Confidentiality Declaration for Parents and Advocates

Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools supports productive communications between school administrator of educators (“School Staff”) and employees, students, parents and guardians. We also understand that some individuals find it helpful to have a support person or advocate (“Support Person”) attend meetings with School Staff.

To ensure that meetings are respectful of individual privacy, if you intend to involve a Support Person in a meeting with School Staff, we ask that you first seek the agreement of School Staff. Once you have done so, we ask that you please review the attached Confidentiality Declaration and provide a copy of it to School Staff signed by you and your Support Person.

The School District is governed by the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Details can be viewed at: <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/information-and-privacy/>.

CONFIDENTIALITY DECLARATION:

I _____ (Parent/Guardian) have requested the participation of a support person in meetings with school staff scheduled to take place on _____ (date). I understand that personal information about me and, if applicable, my child and other persons may be discussed at this meeting in the presence of the support person. I understand and agree that the information discussed at the meeting about other students, staff or third parties is being provided to address a legitimate educational or employment issue. I agree that I will use and disclose this information only for these purposes, and will not disclose it, disseminate it or use it for other purposes. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the guidelines attached.

AGREED TO: _____ DATE: _____

I, _____ (please print name) have been requested to attend meetings **as a support person**. I understand that in the course of these meetings, I may have access to personal information or sensitive information about other individuals. I further understand that this information is only being provided to me for the purposes of allowing me to perform my role as a support person or advocate for the purposes of dealing with the subject matter of the meetings. I agree that I will use and disclose this information only for these purposes, and will not disclose it, disseminate it or use it for other purposes. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the guidelines attached.

AGREED TO: _____ DATE: _____

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *School Act*, the school district must protect the confidentiality of personal information of students and families. All participants at any school meetings are required to respect the confidential nature of all discussions as well as respect the confidentiality of personal student or family information gained through such a meeting or through general access in the school.