

**CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS
REGARDING SCHOOL ACTIONS OR SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

During the course of normal district operations, it is not uncommon for Board of Education members or staff members to receive questions, concerns or complaints from students, parents, or other community members. Board members and staff members will refer those individuals to the staff member who is most directly involved with the issue being raised. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level or additional information is needed, the individual shall follow the established channels of communication outlined in District procedures for receiving answers to questions or the resolution of complaints.

Procedures for Answering Questions, Addressing Concerns or Resolving Complaints:

1. Classroom or Co-Curricular Activities

Step 1: If a person has a questions, concern or complaint regarding classroom activities, the person should first contact the specific teacher. If a person has a question, concern or complaint regarding co-curricular activities, the person should first contact the specific coach or advisor.

Step 2: If the concern or complaint is not resolved at Step 1 or additional information is needed, the person with the concern or complaint should contact the Principal. The person may choose to speak to the athletic director prior to the principal if the issues is related to sports or coaching

Step 3: If the concern or complaint is not resolved at Step 2 or additional information is needed, the person with the concern or complaint should contact the Superintendent.

Step 4: If the concern or complaint is not resolved at Step 3 or additional information is needed, the person may refer the concern or complaint, in writing, to the Board of Education, as outlined in Policy 870- Complaints to the Board of Education.

2. Building Procedures If a person has a question, concern or complaint regarding building procedures, the person should first contact the Principal and, then, follow the process outlined above until the matter is resolved. Examples of “building procedures” would be: the lunch or recess schedule, classroom issues that cannot be resolved with the teacher, or a specific aspect of the curriculum. These issues tend to address more specific and “day-to-day” procedures.

3. District Procedures If a person has a question, concern or complaint regarding District procedures, the person should first contact the Superintendent and, then, follow the process outlined above until the matter is resolved. Examples of “district procedures” would be: the bus schedule, the K-8 curriculum, the school calendar, or Board of Education issues. These issues tend to be more “big picture” in nature.

A person, in presenting a concern or complaint under these procedures shall:

1. determine if the concern or complaint will be expressed informally or formally.

a. Informal – Oral

The person should either schedule an appointment with the appropriate person or contact that person by telephone or by email. An appropriate amount of time should be allowed for both parties to share their thoughts regarding the situation. The concern should be expressed as clearly as possible, indicating as much information as is known. An informal setting is encouraged. The primary purpose is to apprise, acquaint, and inform. The response time for an informal complaint or concern is as follows:

- (1) immediately, if possible, or
- (2) within three (3) work days

b. Formal – In writing

If the concern or complaint is not resolved at the informal level, the complainant has the choice to move the complaint to the formal level. To take the complaint to the formal level, the complainant must file the complaint on the District Complaint Form. Once the concern or complaint is in writing on the designated form, the Complaint Form should be routed as follows:

- If the complainant has already spoken to the person closest to the situation informally, the formal process should begin with the Complaint Form being filed at the next level of the procedures section, as outlined earlier in this Policy.
- If the complainant has decided to begin the process at the formal level, without informal conversation, the formal process should begin with the Complaint Form being filed with the person closest to the situation that is the basis of the complaint, as outlined earlier in this Policy.
- If at any point the complainant has a concern about meeting with the person who should receive the Complaint Form, the complainant may ask the person at the next highest level to be present when the Complaint Form is delivered in order to facilitate the resolution of the concern.

A meeting time that is mutually convenient for all parties should be arranged, in advance, in order to deliver the Complaint Form. If a complainant has chosen to follow the informal path of the complaint procedures and has reached Step 4, which calls for the complaint to be considered by the Board of Education, the complainant must move this process to the formal stage and file the complaint, in writing, as governed by the provisions of Policy 870.

The person receiving the Complaint Form will acknowledge receipt of the form and will respond, in writing, within ten (10) work days.

Throughout the complaint process, the complainant shall:

- have the right to present such concerns or complaints free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal against the person bringing the concern or complaint forward, or any of their children at any time.
- have the right to be accompanied by a representative. However, if the representative is an attorney, the Superintendent must be advised of this in advance so that the attorney representing the school district may be present, as well. The complainant is solely responsible for any expenses related to the representative they may choose to be a party to this process.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

CROSS REFERENCE: Policy #870 Complaints to the Board of Education

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POLICY #872