

As used in this policy “complaint” includes the terms “grievance,” “dispute,” or “concern.”

The Board encourages informal resolution of all complaints, where possible. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. However, where the informal process has not resulted in satisfactory resolution of a complaint or concern, this policy permits individuals to formally address their grievances, without fear of retaliation. This policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted in other laws or policies, nor does the complaint process described in this policy require a full evidentiary hearing at any level.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to apply to complaints regarding non-district matters including but not limited to custody matters, parenting plans, or other similar disputes.

A complaint may be voluntarily withdrawn at any time in the process. Once a complaint is withdrawn it cannot be re-opened. If at any time during the complaint process the District grants the remedy requested, the complaint shall be terminated at that time and may not be further appealed.

If Board members are contacted by parents or citizens regarding a complaint, such members shall direct the parent or citizen to follow the appropriate complaint process.

This policy does not apply to employee complaints or appeals of an administrative discharge or termination which are governed by separate law and policy. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, has the authority to promulgate procedures in supplement to the policy, as needed.

The formal complaint process is initiated by completing a complaint form, available on the District’s web site or from the Superintendent’s office. A written complaint must be initiated within fifteen (15) calendar days of date the individual became aware of the events grieved, or within fifteen (15) calendar days after informal resolution was attempted, if that date is later. Any formal complaint not received within this time period shall be dismissed as untimely and shall not be subject to further appeal or review. In addition, any complaint appeals received outside the timelines below shall also be dismissed as untimely and that dismissal is not subject to further appeal or review.

Any documents related to the complaint should be included with the Level I complaint form. Documents not submitted at Level I will not be considered by the District.

In addition, the Superintendent or his/her designee has the authority to designate shorter timelines and/or abbreviated processes for this complaint process where, in the Superintendent’s discretion, a lengthy process may result in substantial disruption to the educational environment or substantial hardship/disruption for students, staff, or families of the District. In such circumstances, the Superintendent will make reasonable efforts to advise the complainant and relevant parties of the need for the adjustment and the basis for the changes so that interested parties are provided a fair opportunity to be heard.

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**Board of Education Policy Manual**

**Level I Complaint**

A Level I complaint should be initiated with the lowest level administrator who has authority to remedy the complaint. If the grievance alleges unlawful discrimination or harassment of a student, the parent or member of the public must also provide a copy of the complaint to the campus principal so that the administration can conduct a separate investigation consistent with the policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment of students.

Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a formal complaint, the appropriate administrator will meet with the grievant to hear and consider the issues being grieved and remedies sought.

If needed, the administrator who heard the complaint will further investigate the Level I grievance. A written Level I response to the complaint will be mailed within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the grievance meeting. By mutual written agreement the response time may be lengthened in order to fully investigate the complaint.

If, after receiving the written Level I response, the grievant does not consider the complaint to be satisfactorily resolved, he or she may appeal to the Superintendent. If the grievant does not receive a written Level I response, sent by the ten (10) calendar day deadline, or as otherwise agreed, the grievant may appeal to Level II.

**Level II Appeal**

If the grievant did not receive a Level I response, or does not consider the grievance to have been resolved at Level I, a Level II appeal may be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days after the Level I was mailed, or after the deadline for sending the Level I response has passed. Level II appeal forms are available in the administrative office of every campus, or in the Superintendent's office. A copy of the Level I response should be included with Level II appeal.

A written and timely Level II appeal will be considered by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. That Level II administrator may, at his or her discretion, conduct an investigation of the complaint, may call a meeting with the grievant, and/or may make a determination based on the information from Level I and as submitted by the grievant.

The Level II administrator will mail a written Level II response to the grievant within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the written complaint, as determined by a date stamp on the document indicating receipt by the Superintendent's office or, in the event a conference with the grievant is held, within ten (10) days of any such meeting, whichever is later.

**Level III Appeal – Discretionary Board Review**

If the grievant did not receive a Level II response, or does not consider the grievance to have been resolved at Level II, a Level III may be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days after the Level II was mailed, or after the deadline for sending the Level II response has passed. Level III appeal forms are available in the administrative office of every campus, or in the

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Superintendent's office. A copy of the Level I and Level II response should be included with Level III appeal.

A written and timely Level III appeal *may* be considered by the Board upon review of the written complaint. The Board will review the Level III complaint at a properly convened Board meeting, in open session, unless the subject matter should be reviewed in closed session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act. If the Board declines to consider the complaint, the Level II decision shall be considered upheld and final. The Board will issue to the grievant written notice of its decision not to consider the complaint within five (5) calendar days of the date of the Board meeting wherein the complaint was considered.

If the Board agrees to consider the complaint, the Board members shall review the existing administrative record including the Level I and Level II complaints, any investigation findings and/or other related documentation. After this review, the Board shall issue a written response to the grievant within five (5) calendar days of the date of the Board meeting where the complaint was considered.

The decision of the Board is final.