

## **SUBJECT: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

Complaints by citizens regarding any facet of the school operation often can be handled more satisfactorily by the administrative officer in charge of the unit closest to the source of the complaint. In most instances, therefore, complaints will be made to the Building Principal and/or his/her assistant if the matter cannot be resolved by the teacher, coach, or other school employee. In the event that there exists a specific policy which applies to the complaint (e.g., DASA, Sexual Harassment, etc.) or a specific law (e.g., Education Law section 3214, Civil Service Law, etc.), such provisions shall be followed exclusively.

If the complaint and related concerns are not resolved at this level to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complaint may be carried to the Superintendent and/or one of his/her assistants. Unresolved complaints at the building level must be reported to the Superintendent by the Building Principal. The Superintendent may require the statement of the complainant in writing.

If the complaint and related concerns are not resolved at the Superintendent level to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complaint may be carried to the Board of Education. Unresolved complaints at the Superintendent level must be reported to the Board of Education by the Superintendent. The Board of Education reserves the right to require prior written reports from appropriate parties.

### **Public Complaints to Board Members**

Individuals or groups often confront a single Board member with issues which usually should be handled by the Superintendent. In such cases, the Board member should withhold commitment and/or opinion until the matter has been presented to the whole Board of Education during official session. It is often wise for a Board member to postpone forming an opinion until he/she has had the benefit of hearing the issue discussed by the Board where all aspects of the problem are aired. A Board member should not obligate other members of the Board by predicting how they will vote. Nothing herein shall require the Board to conduct a hearing, take any specific action, or provide a written or oral response to any complaint raised. Appeals with respect to any matter otherwise covered by any other Board policy or law shall be made as outlined in such policy or law and shall not be subject to further review under this general policy.

In carrying out the policy for the handling of complaints the Board will, therefore, observe the following procedure:

- a) Neither the Board as a whole nor any individual member will entertain or consider communications or complaints from teachers, parents, or patrons, until they have first been referred to the Superintendent.
- b) Only in those cases where satisfactory adjustment cannot be made by the administrator and his/her assistants shall communications and complaints be referred to the Board.

(continued)

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS (cont'd)**

- c) Such complaints will be referred to the Superintendent, Board of Education President and Vice President. The complainant will attend a meeting with these three (3) individuals to discuss the issues. After the meeting, the Superintendent and Board Officers will bring the complaint back to the entire Board of Education to be heard.
- d) After a discussion about the complaint with the Board of Education by the Superintendent and Board Officers, the Board will decide if:
  - 1. The item should be placed on the Board agenda;
  - 2. The item should be addressed at a Board of Education Executive Session;
  - 3. A hearing should be conducted with the Board to listen to the issues of the complaining party;
  - 4. Written response to the complainant should be drafted from the Board of Education and Superintendent.

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #8330 -- Objection to Instructional Materials  
#8331 -- Controversial Issues