

SUBJECT: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS/GUIDELINES FOR CITIZEN INPUT**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.

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 (1) 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.

Guidelines for Citizen Input

Since Board members are the elected representatives of the community with respect to the schools, each member should welcome community input, observing the following guidelines so that such input is effectively handled:

- a) When a member receives input on matters such as disciplinary cases, complaints about staff members, etc., and in the cases where the Board member has no prior knowledge of the situation, the member should first ask whether the teacher or administrator involved has been contacted. If the appropriate school person has not been contacted by the subject party, the Board member should insist that such procedure prevail and refrain from making any remarks which would prejudice the orderly administration of due process related to the situation.
- b) In cases where the member is unsure of how to handle a query, the member should tell the party that he/she will research the situation. At this point, the appropriate administrator or the President of the Board should be consulted. This procedure should be used before the individual Board member commits himself/herself to an opinion on a matter in which he/she is not conversant. It is better to give no information than misinformation.
- c) The due process theory in our society and schools is well conceived and should be used properly to ensure the rights of all individuals. If proper procedures are not used, it is possible that someone's rights will be violated.

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- d) If the by-passing of due process levels is allowed to occur, the highest local appeal level (the Board) will become bogged down. In addition, the authority and effectiveness of administrators to operate in their spheres of responsibility will be correspondingly reduced.
- e) Anonymous calls or letters will not be considered by the Board as a whole except upon recommendation of the Board President and/or the Superintendent of Schools.

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