

## **Complaints & Grievances**

The Board recognizes that harmonious relations with its employees can be maintained and improved through effective communications. The interests of all parties can best be served by sincere efforts of all concerned to promote understanding and cooperation. The Board, therefore, has adopted the following procedures as a means to examine and settle equitably, at the lowest possible administrative level, differences and issues relating to discrimination, contracts, salaries, working conditions, and advancement opportunities of employees. These proceedings shall be kept informal and confidential as may be appropriate at all levels of the procedure.

### **Definitions**

A grievance shall mean a complaint by any member of the professional or support staff that there has been a violation, a misinterpretation, or inequitable application of any policy or practice of the school system. Evaluations and other personnel matters that may be appealed under the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act or other state statute shall not be a grievable item under the provision of this policy. The grievance may be initiated orally or in writing at Level One and must be filed within twenty (20) work days following the act or condition which is the basis for the complaint. Beyond the initial step, the grievance shall be in writing.

### **Procedure**

#### **Level One – Informal Procedure**

The aggrieved person shall first discuss the grievance with his/her principal or immediate supervisor with the objective of resolving the matter informally.

#### **Level Two – Formal Procedure**

Step One of the formal grievance procedure commences if, as a result of the discussion between the grievant and the principal/supervisor the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant, then within five (5) work days, the grievant shall set forth the grievance in writing to the principal/supervisor specifying, to wit:

- The nature of the grievance
- The nature or extent of the injury, loss, or inconvenience
- The relief sought
- The results of previous discussion
- The dissatisfaction with decisions previously rendered

The principal or supervisor shall communicate his/her decision to the grievant in writing within fifteen (15) work days of receipt of receipt of the written grievance.

Step Two of the formal grievance procedure commences if the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two-Step One. The grievant may within five (5) work days of the grievance at Level Two-Step One, present his/her grievance to the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall hear the grievance and render a decision within thirty (30) work days after the decision is rendered at Level Two-Step One. At this hearing, the grievant may appear alone or be accompanied by a representative of his/her choice. If the grievance is a sexual harassment complaint, the 30 day timeline is suspended as an outside, independent agency will conduct the investigation based on a timeline necessary and appropriate to gather all facts and present findings.

Step Three of the formal grievance procedure commences in the event the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two-Step Two. The grievant may file in writing with the Board of Education within five (5) work days after the decision from Level Two-Step Two. The Board of Education shall hear the grievance and render a decision within thirty (30) work days after the decision is rendered at Level Two-Step One. If the grievance is a sexual harassment complaint, the 30 day timeline is suspended as an outside, independent agency will conduct the investigation based on a timeline necessary and appropriate to gather all facts and present findings.

Step Four of the formal grievance procedure commences in the event the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance by the Board of Education. The grievant may appeal the decision to the appropriate authorities as provided by law or seek recourse through the state or federal court system.

### **Miscellaneous Provisions**

Timelines – It shall be understood that the timelines imposed at each level and step shall be strictly adhered to and unless the appeal is made within the time allotted, the grievance shall be deemed to have been settled and the employee shall have no further right with respect to said grievance.

Hearing Procedures–The Board of Education and/or Superintendent may establish hearing procedures to follow at Level Two-Step Two and Level Two-Step Three.