

Appendix 6

Complaint Process

The Board recognizes that situations or issues may arise in the operation of the District that are of concern to students, parents, and the public. More often than not, issues are best resolved by working and communicating openly with the people directly involved in the situation. Therefore, the goal of this complaint procedure is to resolve, at the lowest possible level, complaints regarding District matters.

If there is a federal law, state law, or District policy which mandates a specific procedure be followed regarding the complaint, then that procedure supersedes this general complaint policy. Examples include, but are not limited to: complaints regarding special education, discrimination, harassment, bullying, contracts and negotiations or equal opportunity.

The complaint procedure is as follows:

1. The first step to resolve your complaint is to speak directly with the school official or employee involved as soon as possible.
2. If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, you should attempt to resolve the complaint with the immediate supervisor of the school official or employee involved. The supervisor or his or her designee shall, within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint, either: (a) meet with you and render a decision, or (b) indicate that additional time is necessary to resolve the complaint and provide a reasonable timeline for rendering a decision.
3. If you are unable to resolve the issue with the supervisor, you may contact the Superintendent or his or her designee at the Educational Services Center. The Superintendent or his or her designee shall, within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint, either: (a) meet with you and render a decision, or (b) indicate that additional time is necessary to resolve the complaint and provide a reasonable timeline for rendering a decision.
4. If your complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved with the Superintendent, you have the right to bring your concern to the School Board. To do so, you should promptly file a written complaint with the Board Secretary and request a place on the Board's agenda for the next Board meeting. The written complaint should be signed and should include the date, your name, and your address. The written complaint should also summarize the nature and history of your complaint, including a description of your efforts to resolve the complaint. Please include any relevant background, facts and circumstances necessary for the Board to fully understand your complaint. If you feel your complaint involves one or more specific written Board policies, please identify those policies in your written complaint. Please also indicate if you desire for the Board to conduct a hearing on your complaint. The written complaint will be provided to the Board members in advance of the Board meeting. Please note that the written complaint is considered a public document and is available for review by members of the public and the press.

The Superintendent may also provide to the Board, in advance of the Board meeting, a written statement detailing his or her position on the complaint.

5. Upon receipt of your complaint, the Board Secretary shall place the item on the Board's agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. At that meeting, the Board shall determine whether it will take action on the complaint. If the Board determines that it will take action, it may choose to review the complaint solely on the written information provided to it or it may determine that a hearing should be scheduled on the complaint. In the event the Board declines to take action on the complaint, the disposition of the Superintendent or his or her designee shall be final. If the

Board decides to take action based solely on the information that has been provided, the Board may deliberate and take action on the complaint at that meeting or schedule such deliberation for a future meeting. Following deliberation and Board action, the Board will issue a public statement regarding its decision.

6. In the event the Board determines a hearing shall be held, the hearing shall be scheduled as soon as practicable. The Board Secretary shall communicate the scheduled hearing date to you. At the time of the hearing, you shall have the right to present your complaint to the Board and to be represented by counsel. Prior to the hearing, the Board shall determine the procedure and level of formality for the hearing and advise you of the same. The hearing shall take place in an open meeting of the Board, unless a closed session is specifically permitted under the state's open meetings and open records laws, Chapters 21 and 22 of the Code of Iowa. The Board has sole discretion in its decision-making and shall decide the matter as soon as is practicable. The Board will, in a timely fashion, issue a public statement regarding its decision.

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