

# District Policy

## **9130 - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Section: Community

Date Created: September 2006

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Any person or group having a legitimate interest in the schools of this district may present a request, suggestion, or complaint concerning district personnel, the educational program, instructional or resource materials, or the operations of the district. The Board directs the establishment of procedures for the hearing and settlement of requests and complaints that provide a means for resolving them fairly and impartially, permit appropriate redress, and protect district personnel from unnecessary harassment.

When a Board member is confronted with an issue, he/she will withhold comment, commitment and/or opinion and refer the complaint or inquiry to the Superintendent, who shall review the complaint according to established procedures.

Only in those cases where satisfactory adjustment cannot be made by the Superintendent and the staff shall communications and complaints be referred to the Board for resolution.

Any misunderstandings or disputes between the public and school district staff should, whenever possible, be settled by direct, informal discussions among the interested parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve differences that more formal procedures shall be employed. A complaint about a school program or personnel should be addressed to the building principal; a complaint about instructional or resource materials should be addressed to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the hearing of requests and complaints regarding district personnel, the educational program, instructional and resource materials, and the operation of the school district. Procedures will be governed by the following guidelines:

1. The matter will be resolved initially, wherever possible, by informal discussions between or among the interested parties.
2. A matter that cannot be resolved informally may be appealed at successive levels of authority, up to and including the Board of Education.
3. The complaint and its immediate resolution will be reduced to writing at the first and at each successive level of appeal.
4. A reasonable period of time, not to exceed seven working days, will be permitted for the filing of an appeal in writing at each successive level. A decision at each level of appeal must be rendered in writing no later than ten working days after

the appeal is filed, except that the Board shall have thirty calendar days to make its decision.

5. A complainant shall be notified that a decision of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education.
6. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated.

#### Complaints Regarding Instructional Materials

It is recognized that opinions may differ on the appropriateness of any given instructional materials and equipment. Occasionally an individual or group may find instructional materials used in the schools which conflict with their views. Any resident of this district shall have the right to present a request, suggestion or complaint in reference to the physical plant, playgrounds, subject matter or instructional materials.

#### Complaints Regarding Instructional Materials

The Superintendent shall develop procedures to give careful consideration to such requests, suggestions or complaints. These procedures must provide that:

1. All such requests, suggestions or complaints be in writing;
2. In the event of criticism of materials that are in the school or their utilizations, the following will be the procedure:
  - a. The teacher, librarian, supervisor or Principal will request the complainant to complete "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Materials that are Used in the School" form.
  - b. A committee made up of two teachers, two librarians, and two administrators, appointed by the Superintendent, will review the materials in question.
  - c. The use of challenged materials or equipment by class or school shall not be restricted until a final decision has been reached.

The complainant will be sent a copy of the committee's report on their review of the material.

The final decision on controversial reading matter shall rest with the Board after careful examination and discussion of the book or reading matter with school officials or others the Board may wish to involve.

Adopted: 19 September 2006

