

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

The Board believes that complaints and grievances are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible and that staff should be given every opportunity to resolve problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. The Board places trust in its employees and desires to free support staff from spiteful or unwarranted criticism. At the same time some review or investigations may be initiated by administrative personnel. The proper channel of complaints will be as follows:

- a) Teacher or staff member,
- b) Principal or supervisor,
- c) Assistant Superintendent,
- d) Deputy Superintendents
- d) Superintendent and, then
- e) Board of Education as per legal, contractual and/or policy limitations.

In some cases, there may be a half step in the channeling of complaints, i.e., assistant principal. The Board expects all staff members to receive complaints courteously and properly and to reply promptly. The Board or staff will not act on anonymous complaints, or complaints that have not been referred or reviewed at the appropriate level. Board members will refrain from expressing any judgments until such time as the complaint may be properly brought before the Board. Any Board member who makes public comments or takes an active role in investigating or pursuing a complaint on his/her own should be excused from the decision-making process, if the complaint reaches the Board, as the Board member would have prejudiced him/herself prior to consideration.

Complaints or concerns about Board of Education policies, administrative actions or other areas of school operations should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools. Complaints about Board policies shall be in writing, stating the specific objections to the specific policy(ies) or action.

The Superintendent shall review any complaint he/she receives in writing and conduct whatever study or investigation he/she deems appropriate. The Superintendent shall then submit or refer the complaint to the appropriate person or level. In some cases, particularly regarding policy matters, the Superintendent will submit his/her recommendation(s) and/or report to the Board. The Board shall then:

- a) Review the policy, amend or repeal the policy, if appropriate, and notify the complainant of the action taken, or
- b) In other cases, review the Superintendent's recommendation(s) and, possibly, the school attorney's recommendation(s), as well as other relevant information prior to rendering a determination about the complaint or concern.

The district will respond to the determination of any written complaint received within thirty (30) business days.

The complainant may appeal the district's determination to the New York State Education Department.

Complaints Regarding Title I of the ESSA or Academic Intervention Services

Any person or entity representative alleging the district has not upheld its responsibilities under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA), as well as the district's responsibilities for Academic Intervention Services under the Commissioner's regulations section 100.2(ee), may submit a complaint in writing using the chain of command listed above. After 30 days, any decision of the Superintendent which is unsatisfactory to the complainant, or the district's lack of a response to the compliant, may be appealed to the State Education Department (SED).

All such complaints to SED must, as outlined by SED (see the following website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/T1/complaintappeals.htm>)

New York State Department of Education
Title I School & Community Services Office
Room 320 EB
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234.

An appeal must be requested and postmarked with twenty (20) business days of receipt of the district's response to the original complaint.

If the Title I complainant is dissatisfied with the State Education Department's compliant resolution they may file an appeal directly with the United States Department of Education at:

United State Department of Education
Compensatory Education Programs
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Room 3W230, FOB #6
Washington, D.C. 20202-6132

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