



"To Build Knowledge and Skills for Success Today and Tomorrow"

File: KL

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Constructive criticism of the schools is welcomed by the District when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the education program and to help the school personnel in performing their tasks more effectively.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to an individual Board member, the individual or group involved will be advised to take the concern to the appropriate staff member.

The Board believes that complaints and grievances are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Board. The proper channeling of complaints is as follows:

1. The complainant should discuss the complaint in a timely manner with the personnel involved in an effort to resolve the problem.
2. If, after discussion with the personnel involved, the complainant is not satisfied, the complaint should be discussed informally with the administrator in charge.
3. If, after informal discussion with the administrator in charge, the complainant is not satisfied, the complainant may fill out the formal complaint form and submit it to the administrator in charge. The administrator then will respond in writing to the complaint within ten (10) days.
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the written disposition of the matter by the administrator in charge, the complainant may, within ten (10) days after receiving the written response, appeal the matter to the superintendent, who will read the written complaint and the administrator's written response and will meet with the complainant if requested. The superintendent then will respond in writing to the complaint within ten (10) days of receipt.

(NOTE: A complainant may bring an informal complaint to the superintendent after having the informal discussion with the administrator in charge, but if this does not resolve the matter, it is required that the complaint form be filed with the administrator in charge before the superintendent will render a formal decision.)

5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the written response of the superintendent, the complainant may, within ten (10) days after receiving the written response, request placement of the complaint on the agenda of the next regular Board meeting. In considering the complaint, the Board will review the written complaint and the written responses of the administrator in charge and the superintendent as well as listen to oral presentations if appropriate. The Board will render its decision by majority vote and respond in writing within ten (10) days of the meeting.

Exceptions to this policy will be made when the complaints concern Board actions or Board operations only.

If the complainant fails to follow the timelines given above, the complaint will be considered to be resolved. If the principal fails to render a written response in a timely manner, the complaint may be appealed to the superintendent. If the superintendent fails to render a written response in a timely manner, the complaint may be appealed to the Board.

This policy includes complaints about the implementation of federal programs. If complaints about federal programs remain unresolved after following the steps outlined in this complaint policy, the complainant may appeal to the South Dakota Department of Education.

Complaints addressing enrollment, transportation (including inter-district disputes), and other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness are also addressed under this policy. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth may initiate the complaint process directly at the school level or at the district office level. The written response required by the procedures in Steps 3-5 of this policy shall also include notification of the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision to the South Dakota State Department of Education.

Copies of the District complaint form will be available in the offices of all administrators. A complainant will be given a copy of this policy along with the complaint form.

For purposes of the timelines stated in this policy a "day" refers to a day that school is in session, except that during the summer it refers to regular working days that the Business office is open.

LEGAL REF.: SDCL 13-46-1

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