

KE - Public Concerns and Complaints

Public Concerns and Complaints - KE

It shall be the policy of the Board of Directors of MSAD #35 to provide ample opportunity for members of the public to access school officials whenever they may have concerns or complaints regarding school operations, school personnel or events.

It is the goal of this policy:

- to create a climate in the schools whereby persons are encouraged to bring concerns and complaints to the attention of school officials for resolution, and
- to explain the responsibilities of school officials in handling complaints. The Board of Directors believes that constructive criticism, when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of our educational programs, assists school personnel in performing their responsibilities more effectively.

At the same time, the Board of Directors places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in such a manner that employees not be subjected to unnecessary, spiteful, or frivolous complaints.

Parents, students, staff and other citizens with complaints or concerns regarding any aspect of MSAD #35 or an employee thereof shall be encouraged to seek a resolution at the lowest possible level. Generally, the first step will be to discuss the matter directly with the employee responsible for the event, operation or action that has created the concern. If this is clearly inappropriate, because of the nature or severity of the complaint, the person initiating the complaint may request a conference with the principal/immediate supervisor to discuss the complaint. The only exceptions are complaints that concern the Board of Directors actions or operations. Such complaints should be addressed to the Board Chair.

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the lowest level, the person initiating the complaint may appeal the decision to the next level (i.e., Supervisor of Buildings, Grounds & Transportation, Principal, Special Education Director, Assistant Superintendent). If the complaint remains unresolved, it may be presented to the Superintendent.

In situations where a complaint involves the action of an employee, if the complaint is submitted to the Superintendent for resolution, the following process shall be followed:

- A meeting shall be scheduled with the Superintendent;
- The complaint will be committed to writing, setting forth the specific facts on which the complaint is based;
- Any documents related to the incident shall be attached to the written complaint;
- A copy of the written complaint shall be provided to the persons against whom the complaint is made; and
- The Superintendent or designee shall promptly investigate the complaint and issue a statement describing the resolution of the issue.

If the complaint remains unresolved at the Superintendent's level, the person making the complaint may request that the matter be heard by the Board of Directors. The Superintendent/Board Chair shall determine whether the complaint shall be placed on the agenda. If the complaint is placed on a Board agenda, the Board of Directors will determine the procedural rules for hearing the complaint. The person making the complaint and the person against whom the complaint is made will be invited to attend the meeting. The Superintendent shall provide the Board members with a copy of the complaint and any supporting documents.

Any such meeting will be held in executive session. Only if the Board of Directors elects to record the meeting will any recording of the meeting be permitted. If a group submits a complaint that is placed on the Board of Directors' agenda, a delegation of no more than two individuals must be designated to represent the group and to present the complaint to the Board of Directors. At all levels of the complaint process, school employees are required to inform the person making the complaint of his/her right to appeal the decision to the next level.

This policy shall not be utilized by employees for matters or grievances relating to any term or condition of their employment. Such matters shall be addressed through appropriate established channels for grievances.

Cross-reference:

BEDB - Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

BEDH - Public Participation Policy

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