

Washington South Supervisory Union
Northfield and Roxbury School Districts

HANDLING PUBLIC/PARENT CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Effective: 2013-2014 School Year

On occasion parents or members of the community may have a concern/complaint. It is our schools' intents to offer a structure to formally respond to these concern/complaints. The steps outlined below will help us respond effectively and efficiently with concern/complaints.

By utilizing a concern/complaint procedure, it clarifies the "Chain of Command" through which concern/complaints are received and responded to. Generally, the concern/complaint is directed first to the individual closest to the issue of concern. If not satisfied, the next level would be their immediate supervisor or administrator. The third step is the Superintendent. The School Board is the final level of appeal.

Step 1: Complainants are to first bring concern/complaint to the individual concerned (*Please note: Any concerns regarding bullying and/or harassment must be brought to the designated building Harassment Officer*).

Step 2: If the problem cannot be resolved with the individual concerned, it should be brought to the attention of the immediate supervisor or administrator. If the concern/complaint involves an employee, the individual employee shall be given opportunity for explanation, comment, and presentation of the facts as he/she sees them.

Step 3: In the event the immediate supervisor's or administrator's review does not lead to a satisfactory resolution, the complainant may submit the issue to the Superintendent for review and decision.

Step 4:

- If, after completing the above steps, the complainant feels that he/she was not treated in a manner consistent with Board policy, or that the Superintendent did not act in compliance with Board policy, he/she may request in writing to the Board Chair review by the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- The Board review shall determine if actions taken by the district were in compliance with Board policy. This review may take place in executive session if appropriate.
- If there were no Board policy violations the matter is deemed closed. However, the Board may consider revising Board policy for the future.
- If the Board determines violation of Board policy it shall instruct the Superintendent to regain Board policy compliance.
- Board decisions are final.

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Board Procedures for hearing appeals referencing their policies: submitted in writing to the board chair

Step 1: The Board Chair confirms the complainant followed procedure steps 1-5 above.

Step 2: The review is placed on the warned agenda and copies of the written concern/complaint or appeal are distributed to the Board. If allowed by law the review may take place in executive session.

Step 3: At the proper time, the chair recognizes the complainant and asks for a verbal summary of the concern/complaint and the complainant's rationale for why they believe Board policy was violated.

Step 4: Board members are then invited by the chair to ask clarifying questions of the complainant. Board members should refrain from giving opinions.

Step 5: The Superintendent presents to the Board the actions taken by the district in addressing the concern/complaint within procedures.

Step 6: The Board reviews (1) relevant procedures and Board policies, (2) the Superintendent's interpretation of the policy and (3) the actions taken by the district.

Step 7:

- Unless there are unforeseen circumstances, the Board makes a decision regarding policy compliance.
- If there is a determination by the Board that a policy violation occurred, the Board shall direct the Superintendent to regain compliance and may give a timeframe for doing so.
- If there is no violation of policy the matter is closed.
- In either case the Board may consider policy revisions for the future.
- Board decisions are final.