

## **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

This policy is intended (1) to create a climate in the schools whereby persons are encouraged to bring complaints to the attention of school officials for resolution, and (2) to explain the responsibilities of school officials in handling complaints. The School Committee believes that constructive criticism, when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of our educational programs, assists school personnel to perform their responsibilities more effectively. At the same time, the School Committee 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.

Complaints will be referred to the proper school decision-maker for resolution at the lowest possible level. Generally, the first step will be to discuss the matter directly with the employee against whom the complaint is registered. If this is clearly inappropriate because of the nature or severity of the complaint, the person making the complaint may request a conference with the principal/immediate supervisor to discuss the complaint. The principal/immediate supervisor or his/her designee will look into the complaint and communicate with the person making the complaint. Privacy rights of all parties to the complaint will be maintained.

If a complaint cannot be resolved at a lower level, it may be presented to the superintendent. The person requesting the superintendent's review must submit the complaint in writing, setting forth the specific facts on which the complaint is based and attaching all documents in support of the complaint. The superintendent will provide a copy of the written complaint to the person against whom the complaint is made.

If a complaint remains unresolved at the superintendent's level, the person making the complaint may request that the matter be placed on the School Committee's agenda as an executive session. The School Committee chairperson will decide whether the complaint will be placed on a School Committee agenda. If a complaint is placed on an agenda, the superintendent will invite the complainant and the person against whom the complaint is made to attend the meeting and will provide the School Committee members with a copy of the complaint and supporting documents.

The School Committee will determine the procedural rules for any meeting to hear a complaint. Any such meeting will be held in executive session. Only if the School Committee elects to record the meeting will any recording of the meeting be permitted. If a group submits a complaint that is placed on the School Committee agenda, a delegation of no more than two (2) individuals must be designated to represent the group and to present the complaint to the School Committee.

This complaint policy may not be used by employees for employment matters. Such matters need to be processed through the appropriate grievance procedure, if any.

First Reading: May 15, 2002

Second Reading/Adopted: May 15, 2002 (second reading waived)  
(replaces policy KLD)