



Regional School Unit 5
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"To inspire and support every learner by challenging minds, building character, sparking creativity, and nurturing passions."

Becky Foley, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Ann Cromer, Director of Finance & Human Resources

Cynthia Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Bonnie Violette, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Support

TO: Kate Brown, Candy deCsipkes, Maddy Vertenten

FROM: Cynthia Alexander

DATE: March 11, 2020

RE: Policy Review – April 3, 2020

The Policy Sub-Committee is scheduled to meet on Friday, April 3, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. at the RSU5 Central Office.

Agenda

BEB-Board Member Use of Social Media (New policy)

BG-Board of Directors Policy Process

BG-R-Policy Adoption Procedure

BHC-Board of Directors Communications with Staff

DO-Approval for New Programs

JIH-Questioning and Searches of Students

JIH-R-Questioning and Searches of Students Administrative Procedure

KDB-Public's Right To Know/Freedom of Access

KE-Public Concerns and Complaints

KEB-Complaints About School Personnel

BOARD MEMBER USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Board recognizes that many, if not most, of its members are active users of social media, including but not limited to, online platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, and other digital media such as blogs and personal websites. The Board understands that while social media can be a positive tool for supporting schools and encouraging community engagement, Board members need to be aware of the legal and ethical considerations that arise when they post, “message,” or otherwise interact with others on social media platforms.

It is not the intent of this policy to interfere with or restrict a Board members’ freedom of speech, but to set standards [**OR: expectations**] for social media conduct that are consistent with law and Board policy, including the Board’s Code of Ethics.

Board members shall comply with the following provisions:

- Board members shall not post on social media or engage in online discussions as a substitute for deliberations at Board meetings. Board members should be aware that social media activity can be perceived as a meeting if a sufficient number (a quorum) of Board members are involved on the site to influence or determine the course of action that will be taken by the Board, even if other people are posting to the site as well.
- Board members should be aware that any posting that pertains to school unit matters may create a “record” that is subject to laws and regulations pertaining to the retention and disposition of local government records, and to discovery in legal proceedings involving the Board or the school unit.
- Board members shall avoid disclosing confidential or personally identifiable information about students (including images), school unit employees, or Board matters or discussions that have taken place in executive sessions. Board members shall comply with the same standards as school employees with regard to confidential information.

Board members should adhere to the following ethical guidelines when using social media in their role as public officials:

A Board member should:

- Recognize that he/she has no authority to speak on behalf of the Board unless specifically designated to do so, and make it clear that he/she is speaking in his/her individual capacity;
- Feel free to invite the public to upcoming school district events, share information about public hearings on bills that affect the schools, and share links to public information about the district (e.g. the proposed budget), and the like, but be clear that he/she is doing so as an individual and not in any official capacity;
- Conduct himself/herself on social media in a manner that reflects well on the Board and on the school unit, and with the decorum expected of an elected official;
- Avoid posting in anger, even when provoked;
- Refrain from harassing, defaming, or disparaging fellow Board members or others based on racial, religious, or other personal characteristics;
- Keep deliberations within meetings of the Board;
- Take care to avoid disclosing confidential or personally identifiable information about students (including images), school unit employees, or Board discussions that have taken place in executive sessions;
- Avoid posting information that is misleading or inaccurate or which has not been released to the public;
- Not make any promise that he/she will vote in a particular way;
- Avoid posting content that indicates he/she has reached an opinion on a pending matter;
- Direct persons presenting concerns or complaints through social media to follow the Board's policy pertaining to public concerns and complaints;
- When summarizing discussion or action that took place at Board meetings, share only information from open meetings and make it clear that the posting is not an official record of the meeting. A Board member should never disclose discussions that have occurred in executive session.

- Retain electronic records, including the Board member's own posts and content others post to the Board member's account when required to do so by law, regulations, or legal process.
- Comply with the school unit's acceptable use rules, as applicable to school unit employees, when using school-unit owned devices or technology resources, or when accessing the Internet through school unit's network using a personal device.

Legal reference: 1 MRSA § 401 et seq.
20-A MRSA § 6001-6002
20 USC § 1232g

Cross Reference: BBAA–Board Member Authority and Responsibilities
BCA–Board Member Code of Ethics
BEC–Executive Sessions
GBJ–Personnel Records and Files
JRA–Student Education Records and Information
KE–Public Concerns and Complaints

PLEASE NOTE MSMA sample policies and other resource materials do not necessarily reflect official Association policy. They are not intended for verbatim replication. Sample policies should be used as a starting point for a board's policy development on specific topics. Rarely does one board's policy serve exactly to address the concerns and needs of all other school units. MSMA recommends a careful analysis of the need and purpose of any policy and a thorough consideration of the application and suitability to the individual school system.

MSMA sample policies and other resource materials may not be considered as legal advice and are not intended as a substitute for the advice of a board's own legal counsel.

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

The RSU No. 5 Board considers policy development its most important governance function.

It is the intent of the Board to develop written policies that will serve as the foundation for the successful and efficient operation of RSU No. 5 and its schools.

The Board accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

School Board policies are statements that set forth the purposes and prescribe in general terms the organization and program of a school system. They create a framework within which the Superintendent and the staff can discharge their assigned duties with positive direction. They tell what is wanted. They may also indicate why and how much. Policies should define clearly the goals and objectives of the school system, allow for the flexibility that is vital in day-to-day operations, reflect the board's vision, define roles and responsibilities (who is supposed to do what), and include measurable outcomes.

The Board's policies are framed and meant to be interpreted in terms of federal laws and regulations, state statutes and the rules of the Maine Department of Education, State Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies at various levels of government. The Board's policies are also intended to reflect the Board's educational philosophy and instructional objectives and practices and procedures that are supported by research and generally accepted by leaders and authorities in the field of public education.

It is the Board's intent that its policies set goals and provide direction and guidance for administrators, staff, and students and serve as sources of information for parents, community members and others who are interested in or connected with the schools.

The Board regards policy development and review as an ongoing process. The need for a new policy or revision or deletion of an existing policy may arise from a change in law and/or regulations, modification of the school unit's vision or goals, educational research or trends, the occurrence of a significant incident or a recommendation or request from Board members, school administrators, staff, parents, students or other interested persons.

Adoption of new or revised policies and repeal of existing policies is solely the responsibility of the Board. Policies will be adopted, amended or repealed only by the affirmative vote of a majority of members present and voting.

Policies shall become effective upon Board adoption or at a future date designated by the Board at the time of adoption.

The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for distributing new or revised policies to Board members and for making policies accessible to school personnel, students and the public.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §1001 (1) (A)

Cross Reference: BEDF – Voting Procedure
BG-R – Policy Adoption Procedure

Adopted: November 18, 2009

Revised: April 27, 2011

Reviewed: February 26, 2014

POLICY ADOPTION PROCEDURE

The following procedure shall be used to develop, adopt, review, revise and/or delete (repeal) RSU No. 5 Board policies:

- A. The Board's Policy Committee is charged with reviewing and recommending all new policies and policy changes to be considered by the Board.
 - 1. Individual Board members, Board subcommittees, the Superintendent, and members of the public may submit policy suggestions and concerns directly to the Policy Committee. Policy suggestions that are submitted to the Board Chair or the Superintendent will be forwarded to the Policy Committee. School unit employees should follow any and all applicable administrative procedures and/or collective bargaining agreement provisions for submitting policy suggestions.
 - 2. The Policy Committee, together with the Superintendent, will be responsible for reviewing and researching suggestions for new policies and policy changes. The Policy Committee may seek or ask the Superintendent to provide information such as, but not limited to, the specific need for the policy; the fiscal consequences of the proposed policy; the potential effect of the policy on the instructional program, staff, students and the community; samples of policies on the same or similar subjects; applicable provisions of state and/or federal law and regulations; and the anticipated costs and benefits of implementing, enforcing and monitoring the proposed policy.
 - 3. The Policy Committee may prepare draft policies or delegate the drafting of all or individual policies to the Superintendent.
 - 4. At an appropriate stage in the process, the Superintendent, on behalf of the Policy Committee and the Board, shall notify the bargaining agent for the school unit's teachers of any proposed new educational policy or proposed modification of any existing educational policy.

The Policy Committee may also seek input or discuss the proposal with other groups affected by the policy.
 - 5. The Policy Committee will make reports to the Board regarding its activities and the status of policy development.
- B. Upon recommendation by the Policy Committee, the first reading of a new policy, revision or deletion of policy shall be placed on the agenda of a regular Board meeting. Board members shall receive the policy, supporting material, if appropriate, and any written recommendations in advance of the meeting date.

The Policy Committee Chair will explain the proposed policy or policy change. The Board may discuss the substance of the policy proposal, and a vote shall be held to acknowledge the first reading of the policy. Any changes to the policy agreed to by consensus or by vote on a motion to amend shall be made prior to the second reading.

- C. At a subsequent regular meeting, at least two weeks but no more than eight weeks after the first reading, the policy shall be placed on the agenda for second reading and action. Amendments may be introduced and acted upon. If a main motion to approve the policy is not passed at such a meeting by a majority vote of Board members present and voting, the process for that policy is ended unless the Board, by vote, takes action to table further consideration of the policy or otherwise dispose of the policy (e.g., refer it back to the Policy Committee for further research).
- D. The Superintendent will be responsible for making new and revised policies available to board members, school unit personnel, students and the public by sending copies to the schools, updating the school unit's website and/or other appropriate means as soon as practicable following adoption. Board members should update their policy manuals when they receive copies of new or revised policies or notifications of deletions.
- E. The Superintendent shall provide each Board member with a policy manual, in print, on a CD, and/or by other means, as specified by the Board. If Board member access to the policy manual will be online, the Superintendent will provide each Board member with instructions for accessing it. The Superintendent /designee may periodically recall all policy manuals for administrative updating to ensure that the content of all Board manuals is current and consistent.

Legal Reference: 26 MRSA § 965(1) (C)

Cross Reference: BEDB - Agenda
 BG - School Board Policy
 CHD - Administration in the Absence of Policy

Adopted: November 18, 2009
 Revised: April 27, 2011
 Reviewed: February 26, 2014

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMUNICATIONS WITH STAFF

The Board of Directors recognizes that discussion of educational issues is vital to the development of a world class education system. All members of the organization and larger community share a common and basic responsibility – the education and welfare of the children in the schools. The Board values communication about these general and global educational responsibilities. The Board also recognizes that there must be a clear communication protocol in place to resolve specific issues for an efficient school system.

Board of Directors and Superintendent

The relationship of the Board of Directors and the Superintendent can best be described as one of teamwork. They must function cooperatively as some of their functions are not readily separable. However, the primary functions are separable and should be clearly understood by each. The Board of Directors is the legislative body of the school unit. It exercises its mandated management of the schools through the formation of policies.

The Superintendent is the executive officer of the Board of Directors and the chief administrative officer. The Board of Directors recognizes this and wishes to make this clear to all staff members and to all citizens.

All communications or reports to the Board of Directors, or to any sub-committee of the Board, from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other employees shall be submitted through the Superintendent.

Board of Directors and Principal

The School Principal has no direct administrative relations with the Board of Directors. His/her relations to the Board are through the Superintendent, for the Board of Directors recognizes that the Superintendent is the person to whom it must look for professional leadership within the schools. A spirit of cooperation and mutual helpfulness must prevail between the Superintendent and the Principal if the best results are to be realized. For instance, the Principal and the Superintendent must cooperate in the selection of school staff because the Principal is in the best position to know the kind of person needed for a particular type of service in the school. However, the Principal must make recommendations to the Superintendent and not to the Board of Directors. At all times the Principal must remember that all matters which require Board action must be presented to the Board by the Superintendent.

Board of Directors and Teachers

The relationship of the teacher to the Board of Directors is indirect. The teacher is directly responsible to the Principal and through him/her to the Superintendent, and then to the Board of Directors. However, this does not mean that the teacher does not have

access to the Superintendent or to the Board. Conditions may arise when direct access may be obtained through established communication channels.

Cross Reference: BEDH – Public Participation at Board of Directors Meetings
 KE – Public Concerns and Complaints
 KEB – Complaints About School Personnel

Adopted: November 18, 2009
Revised: April 27, 2011
Reviewed: February 26, 2014

APPROVAL FOR NEW PROGRAMS

New programs and services within the School Department that result in the expenditure of school department funds are to be approved by the Board prior to implementation.

Adopted: January 27, 2010
Reviewed: December 14, 2011
Reviewed: April 30, 2014

QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES OF STUDENTS

The Board seeks to maintain a safe and orderly environment in the schools. School administrators may question and/or search students in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedure.

Students, their personal property, and their vehicles may be searched upon reasonable suspicion that they possess any items or substances which are prohibited by law, Board policies and/or school rules, or which interfere with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.

When special circumstances exist, including but not limited to a suspected ongoing violation of the Board's drug/alcohol or weapons policies, or when a potential threat to safety is identified, school administrators may search groups of students or the entire student body without individualized suspicion.

Student use of all school storage facilities, including but not limited to lockers, desks, and parking lots, is a privilege granted by the school. All storage facilities are school property and remain under the control, custody, and supervision of the school. Only locks provided by RSU5 may be used to secure student lockers.

Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or for any items placed in such storage facilities. School administrators have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and without notice or consent. Canine patrols may be used.

If a search produces evidence that a student has violated or is violating the law, Board policies and/or school rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school administrators and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence may be forwarded to law enforcement authorities as required by law or as deemed appropriate by school administrators.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement, with input from legal counsel, administrators, and/or other appropriate persons, any administrative procedure necessary to carry out this policy.

This policy and the accompanying procedure will be included in student/parent handbooks. Such administrative procedures shall be subject to Board approval.

Cross Reference: JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students
JICIA – Weapons, Violence, and School Safety
JK – Student Discipline
KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

Adopted: March 24, 2010
Reviewed: March 13, 2013
Revised: November 20, 2013

QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES OF STUDENTS ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

The purpose of this administrative rule is to provide guidelines for the conduct of student questioning and searches by authorized school administrators. These are guidelines only and may be adjusted within reasonable and lawful limits on a case-by-case basis. School administrators have the discretion to request the assistance of law enforcement authorities as they deem necessary and in accordance with Board policy.

During a search, any illegal item(s) found that violates Board policies or school rules, or which in the reasonable judgment of school administrators represents a threat to the safety and welfare of the school population will be seized. Illegal item(s) shall be turned over the law enforcement authorities. Other item(s) will be stored in a secure location until a determination is made regarding appropriate disposition.

School administrators are required to document all searches and items seized or impounded. The Superintendent and the parents of students involved will be provided with a copy of such reports.

Questioning by School Administrators

1. School administrators are under no obligation to notify a student's parents/guardians prior to questioning a student regarding alleged violations of Board policies, school rules, and/or federal/state laws.
2. School administrators will inform the student of the reasons for the questioning and provide an opportunity for the student to respond to any allegations. School administrators will make a reasonable effort to question the student in a location out of the sight and hearing of other students.
3. If a student fails to cooperate, lies, misleads, or threatens any person during questioning, he/she may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

Searches of Students, Personal Property in Student's Immediate Possession

1. School administrators are authorized to search students and/or personal property in student's immediate possession, when, in their judgment, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student has violated or is violating Board policies, school rules, federal/state laws, or is interfering with operations, discipline or general welfare of the school.
2. All searches of students and/or their personal property, will be authorized and conducted by a school administrator in the presence of a witness, except where the circumstances render the presence of a witness impractical. A reasonable effort will be made to conduct searches out of sight and hearing of other students.
3. Searches should be reasonably related to the suspected violation and no more intrusive than necessary to discover the evidence for which the search was instigated.

Searches may include pat downs and searches of the student's outer clothes (e.g., pockets, jacket, shoes, hat) and personal belongings (e.g., purse, backpack, gym bag, lunch bag). The student may be given the opportunity to open any closed items and items that are not easily accessible to visual search. If the student refuses, the administrator will open and search the items. If the search produces a reasonable suspicion of the presence of evidence, a broader search may be justified. If a strip search appears to be necessary law enforcement authorities will be contacted.

4. Searches which disclose evidence that a student has violated Board policies or school rules will be addressed through school disciplinary procedures. Evidence of violation of federal/state laws may result in school disciplinary action and/or be forwarded to law enforcement authorities for possible investigation/prosecution.

Searches of Lockers, Desks, and Other School Storage Facilities

1. School administrators will consult with the Superintendent prior to conducting random searches. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or for any items placed in such storage facilities. School administrators have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and without notice or consent.
2. Searches of individual student lockers, desks, or other storage facilities and their contents based upon reasonable suspicion will be conducted in the presence of the student and a witness, if practical under the circumstances of the search. A reasonable effort will be made to conduct searches out of the sight and hearing of other students. The student may be given the opportunity to open any closed items or items that are not easily accessible to visual search. If the student refuses, the administrator will open and search the items.
3. Any searches that disclose evidence that a student has violated Board policies or school rules will be addressed through school disciplinary procedures. Evidence of violation of federal/state laws may result in school disciplinary action and/or be forwarded to law enforcement authorities for possible investigation/prosecution.

Patrolling of Parking Lots and Searching Vehicles

1. Students may drive vehicles to school and park in designated areas in accordance with school rules. School administrators retain the authority to patrol parking lots.
2. If school administrators have a reasonable suspicion that a vehicle which a student has parked at school contains evidence that the student has or is violating Board policies or school rules, or federal/state laws, and/or there is a substantial threat to the welfare and safety of the schools, a school administrator will search the vehicle in the presence of a witness, except where the circumstances make the presence of a witness impractical.
3. If practical, the student should be present during the search. A reasonable effort will be made to conduct searches out of the sight and hearing of other students. The

student may be given the opportunity to open any closed items or items that are not easily accessible to visual search. If the student refuses, the administrator will open and search the items.

Canine Patrols

1. The Superintendent may authorize canine patrols to take place anywhere on school property if he/she deems it advisable to maintain school safety or if there is a reasonable suspicion that drugs, weapons, and/or other illegal substances or items will be found. Canine patrols may include school lockers and/or student vehicles in school parking lots.
2. The Superintendent must make requests for canine patrols in writing to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Only certified dogs and handlers may be used.
3. Whenever possible, canine patrols will be scheduled to minimize disruption of the academic program and risk of contact with students.
4. Teachers will be notified prior to the initiation of a canine patrol to keep students in their classroom during the patrol. Any students in the parking lot, or anywhere outside of a classroom, prior to a canine patrol will be instructed to report to the school office or appropriate classroom.
5. Any locker and/or vehicle identified by the canine patrol will be noted by the school administrators accompanying the patrol.
6. Immediately following removal of the dogs, each area noted during the canine patrol will be searched. Each search will be conducted by a school administrator in the presence of a witness, except where the circumstances make the presence of a witness impractical.
7. If practical, the student should be present during a search of his/her locker or vehicle. A reasonable effort may be made to conduct the search out of the sight and hearing of other students. The student may be given the opportunity to open any closed items or items that are not easily accessible to visual search. If the student refuses, the administrator will open and search the items.

Cross Reference: JIH – Questioning and Searches of Students
KLG – Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

Administrative Procedure Adopted: February 9, 2010

Board of Directors Adopted: March 13, 2013

Revised: November 20, 2013

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW/FREEDOM OF ACCESS

The Board recognizes the importance of a well-informed public to the operations of the school unit. The Board will comply with all applicable sections of Maine's Freedom of Access Act.

The Board designates the Superintendent, and to act in the absence of the Superintendent, the Assistant as the Public Access Officer for RSU5

Except as otherwise provided by statute, all Board proceedings shall be open to the public, any person shall be permitted to attend, and any records or minutes of such proceedings that are required by law shall be made promptly and shall be open to public inspection.

Board agendas and minutes, proposed and approved Board policies, annual budget reports, student handbooks and Board member Freedom of Access training documentation/certificates shall be available for immediate inspection and/or copying in the Superintendent's Office. Requests for all other public records shall be made to the Public Access Officer, specifying the records desired for inspection/copying. The Public Access Officer/designee may request clarification concerning which public record or records are being requested.

The Public Access Officer/designee shall acknowledge receipt of a request for inspection and/or copying of public records within five working days of the request.

If the request is denied, the Public Access Officer/designee shall inform the requestor in writing within five working days of the request and shall state the reason for denial. Otherwise, inspection and/or copying may be scheduled to occur within a reasonable period of time following the request at a time that will not delay or inconvenience the regular activities of the school unit.

The school unit is not required to create a record that does not exist.

ELECTRONICALLY STORED PUBLIC RECORDS

In compliance with the Freedom of Access Act, the school unit will provide access to an electronically stored public record as a printed document or in the medium in which the record is stored, at the requester's option, except that the school unit is not required to provide access to an electronically stored public record as a computer file if the school unit does not have the ability to separate or prevent the disclosure of confidential information contained in or associated with that file. The school unit is not required to provide access to a computer terminal.

FEES

Except as otherwise provided by law or court order, RSU5 may charge fees as follows:

- A. A fee of .20¢ per page to cover the cost of copying.
- B. A fee of \$10.00 per hour after the first hour of staff time per request to cover the actual cost of searching for, retrieving, and compiling the requested public record. Compiling the public record includes reviewing and redacting confidential information.

- C. If conversion of a public record into a form susceptible of visual or aural comprehension or into a usable format in necessary, a fee to cover the actual cost of conversion.
- D. A charge for the actual mailing costs to mail a copy of the record.
- E. No fee shall be charged for inspection of public records, unless the record cannot be inspected without being compiled or converted, in which case paragraph B or C applies.

As required by law, the school unit will provide the person making the request an estimate of the time necessary to complete the request and of the total cost and, if the estimated total cost exceeds \$30.00, will inform the requestor before proceeding. If the estimated total cost is greater than \$100.00 or if the requestor has previously failed to pay a fee assessed for access to RSU5 records, the requestor may be required to pay all or a portion of the estimated cost prior to the search, retrieval, compiling, conversion and copying of the public record.

The Public Access Officer is directed to develop and implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out this policy.

Legal Reference: 1 M.R.S.A. § 401 et seq.

Cross Reference: BEC – Executive Sessions
GBJ – Personnel Records and Files
JRA – Student Educational Records

Adopted: August 25, 2010

Revised: November 28, 2012

Revised: February 26, 2014

PUBLIC CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Parents, students or other citizens with complaints or concerns regarding any aspect of RSU No. 5 School Department or an employee thereof shall be encouraged to seek a resolution at the lowest possible level. The only exceptions are complaints that concern Board actions or operations. Such complaints should be addressed to the Board Chair and/or Superintendent.

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the lowest level, the person initiating the complaint may appeal the decision to the next level.

If the complaint cannot be resolved at any lower level, it may be appealed to the Superintendent. If the complaint remains unresolved at the Superintendent's level, the person making the complaint may request that the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regular Board meeting. The Superintendent/Board Chair shall determine whether the complaint should be placed on the agenda.

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 established channels for grievances.

Cross Reference: BEDB – Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

Adopted: August 25, 2010

Reviewed: April 24, 2013

COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

This policy is intended (1) to create climate in the schools whereby persons are encouraged to bring complaints to the attention of school official for resolution, and (2) 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 to perform their responsibilities more effectively. At the same time, the school board 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 respected.

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 Board's agenda. The Board Chairperson will decide whether the complaint will be placed on a Board 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 board members with a copy of the complaint and supporting documents.

The Board will determine the procedural rules for any meeting to hear a complaint. Any such meeting will be held in executive session. Only if the Board 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 board agenda, a delegation of no more than two individuals must be designated to represent the group and to present the complaint to the Board.

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.

Cross Reference: BEDH – Public Participation at Board of Directors Meetings

Adopted: May 25, 2011
Reviewed: April 24, 2013