



THOMAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

Dr. Lisa Williams, Superintendent

200 N. Pinetree Blvd., Thomasville, GA 31792

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Thomas County School Federal Programs/ Title I Complaint Procedures

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization, or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with Thomas County Schools if that individual, organization, or agency believes and alleges that Thomas County Schools is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

- Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education Program (CTAE)
- School Food Nutrition Program
- School Improvement Grant Programs 1003(a)
- School Improvement Grant Programs 1003(g)
- Title I, Part A: Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
- Title I, Part A: Parent and Family Engagement
- Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children Program
- Title I, Part D: Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk
- Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction Grant
- Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
- Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants
- Title V, Part B: Rural and Low-Income School Program
- Title VI, Part A: Section 6111: State Assessment Program
- Title VI, IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Act
- Title VIII, Part F: Section 8503: Complaint Procedures for Participation of Private School Children
- Title IX, Part A: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

C. Complaints Originating at the Local Level

As part of its assurances within the ESEA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 8503 within the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), an LEA accepting federal funds must have local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve through local written complaint procedures. In the event that you have a complaint, we wish you to contact the school your child attends and seek assistance from the teacher or administration as an initial point of contact. If you are unable to resolve your concern, you are invited to contact the superintendent at the Thomas County School Board offices. If you are still unsatisfied, you may contact the Georgia Department of Education via their website:

<http://programcomplaint.doe.k12.ga.us/everestwebportal/webform.asp>. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with the Thomas County Schools to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue with Thomas County Schools.

Board of Education

**Ken Harper • Chris Hayes • Mitchell Herring
Ed Hopper • Leah Smith • Dan Stewart • Joy West
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D. Filing a Complaint

A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

- A statement that Thomas County Schools has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program.
- The date on which the violation occurred.
- The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation).
- A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.
- Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency.
- Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position.
- The address of the complainant.

Once the complaint is received by Thomas County Schools, it will be copied and forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent for Federal Programs.

E. Investigation of Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, Thomas County Schools will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

- The date Thomas County Schools received the complaint.
- How the complainant may provide additional information.
- A statement of the ways in which Thomas County Schools may investigate or address the complaint.
- Any other pertinent information.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, Thomas County Schools will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information to complete the investigation and issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, a timeline for corrective action will be included. The sixty (60) day timeline may be extended if exceptional circumstances occur. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

F. Right of Appeal

If an individual, organization, or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of Thomas County Schools, that individual, organization, or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. For complaints filed pursuant to Section 8503 (complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal to the Georgia Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Thomas County Schools' decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

References

School board policy GAE (2): Complaints and Grievances, Certified Employees
Reference 3.1.L GADOE FY24 Cross-Functional Monitoring Document
Section 8503 (20 U.S.C. 7883, ESSA of 1965 reauthorized by ESSA 2015)

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