Staff Grievance Procedures Policy

Rationale:

Great Oaks Legacy Charter School ("School") recognizes and respects the integral roles that teachers and staff play in the education of its students. The Board's objective is to strengthen that partnership and foster open and productive channels of communication among teachers, staff, school administrators, Campus Directors, Human Resources, and the Executive Director and Board of Trustees.

To that end, the Board wishes to institute a fair and efficient process by which internal grievances can be resolved amicably and consistent with the law. If a staff member has a complaint or dispute with any School policy or action ("grievance"), it should be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution proceedings set forth in this Policy, or as otherwise mandated by law.

Procedure:

Informal Grievances

- Any person who has any campus-specific grievance should contact the Campus Director, in an attempt to resolve the matter, within ten (10)
- school days from the time when the matter that is the subject of the ● grievance occurred.
- Any person who has a grievance that is not specific to a particular campus should contact their direct manager.
- If the complainant is satisfied with the response of the Campus Director or direct manager, no further action will be required, and the grievance will be considered resolved.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Campus Director or direct manager, the next step in the grievance process is to contact the member of the Senior Leadership Team ("SLT") who supervises their campus or department.
- If after contacting a member of the SLT the complainant remains unsatisfied with the response to the grievance, the complainant may then contact the

School's Chief People and Equity Officer (who 1 v. October 2023 | GOLCS Employee Handbook oversees Human Resources) and attend a meeting with the Chief People and Equity Officer to discuss the grievance.

- If after contacting the School's Chief People and Equity Officer, the complainant remains unsatisfied with the response, the complainant may then contact the Executive Director and the Secretary of the School Board in writing as described below.

Formal Grievances

- If the grievance is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction through the informal grievance procedure set forth above, the complainant must submit a formal grievance in writing to the Executive Director and the Board Secretary within five (5) school days after meeting with the Chief People and Equity Officer as set forth above.

The written grievance must;

- clearly describe the original issue raised by the complainant;
- explain the basis for the complainant's dissatisfaction with any resolution previously rendered, and indicate an acceptable remedy.

Referral to Committee:
After reviewing the written grievance, the Executive Director, Board Secretary and Board Chair shall determine, upon consultation with Counsel, if necessary, whether the nature of the grievance requires further consideration by any of the following:

- Board Grievance Committee; or
- Advisory Grievance Committee pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-15.
- The jurisdictional limits of each committee are described below in their applicable sections.

Board Grievance Committee Jurisdiction:

- The Board Grievance Committee shall consider grievances related to all other matters not otherwise excluded in this Policy or that are subject to the Advisory Grievance Committee's jurisdiction set forth in Section 5 below.

- The Board Grievance Committee reserves the right to decline to review grievances that it deems in its sole discretion to fall primarily under the purview of the Executive Director.

In such an event, the Board Grievance Committee shall work in conjunction with the Executive Director in an advisory capacity.

Grievances arising specifically under laws applicable to the School may be subject to review and consideration by the Commissioner of Education only.

Composition.

- The Board Grievance Committee shall consist of the Board Chair and two (2) other trustees selected by the Board. If a Board trustee has a conflict of interest pertaining to a grievance, that trustee shall recuse himself or herself from serving on the Board Grievance Committee regarding said grievance. The conflict of interest should be reported to the Board Chair as soon as it is discovered.
- The term of service for the trustees on the Board Grievance Committee shall be one (1) year.

Provided that all prior steps in this Policy have been followed, the Board Grievance Committee will meet with all concerned parties within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the written grievance.

- The Board Grievance Committee will provide an opportunity to the complainant to present his or her grievance as well as to the person(s) responding to the grievance ("respondents") and any potential witnesses. These presentations will be informal as no sworn testimony will be given. There will be no right to cross examine the complainant, any respondents or any witnesses.
- Whether the presentation is held in a public or private session of a Board Grievance Committee meeting will depend on the subject matter of the grievance.

Advisory Grievance Committee Jurisdiction:

- Any grievance that alleges a violation of the provisions of the New Jersey Charter School Programs Act shall be directed to the Advisory Grievance Committee, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-15.

Composition:

- The Advisory Grievance Committee shall consist of one (1) parent/guardian, one (1) teaching staff member, and one (1) Board trustee.

Upon a request for an advisory grievance, each of parents/guardians, leadership and teaching staff members and trustees will select an individual to serve in their respective positions on the Advisory Grievance Committee.

- In the event that the teaching and leadership staff members and/or parents/guardians are unable to appoint members, the Board shall accept nominations and shall make the necessary appointments to constitute the Advisory Grievance Committee.
- The Chair of the Advisory Grievance Committee will be selected by the other Advisory Grievance Committee members.

If a Committee member has a conflict of interest pertaining to a grievance, that member shall recuse himself or herself from serving on the Advisory Grievance Committee regarding said grievance.

- The term of service for each member of the Advisory Grievance Committee will be one (1) year.
- Resolution
- Once the applicable Committee has completed its discussions with all complainants, respondents, and witnesses, that committee shall deliver within 10 school days a non-binding recommendation to the Board concerning the disposition of the grievance.
- The Board will review the applicable committee's recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and make a final decision by the next regularly scheduled Board meeting after its receipt of the applicable committee's recommendation.

Other General Guidelines for Grievances

- A complainant, respondent or witness may represent himself/herself at all stages of the grievance proceeding or may be represented by a person of his or her choosing.
- There shall be no retaliation against any person for initiating a grievance proceeding in good faith.
- The information gathered in a grievance proceeding shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible and as mandated by law.
- This grievance process shall not be applied to change the allocation of responsibilities between the Executive Director (to administer the School) and the Board (to set policy and oversee the administration of the School.).