

1 Great Falls School District

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3 **THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

1770

4  
5 Uniform Complaint Procedure

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7 The Board establishes this Uniform Complaint Procedure as the process for addressing  
8 complaints arising within the District. This Uniform Complaint Procedure is intended to  
9 be used for all complaints except those governed by a specific process in state or federal  
10 law that supersedes this process or governed by a collective bargaining agreement.  
11 Matters covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be reviewed in accordance  
12 with the terms of the applicable agreement.

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14 This uniform complaint procedure shall be made available on the District's website at a  
15 location which shall be included in all handbooks issued by the District.

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17 When a complaint is made directly to the Board or to an individual Board member, it will  
18 generally be referred to the administration for study and possible solution.

19  
20 See section below pertaining to complaints related to sexual harassment or a violation of  
21 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (the Civil Rights Act), Title II of the  
22 Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of  
23 1973.

24  
25 The District will seek to respond to and resolve complaints at the lowest level, and if a  
26 complaint is formally filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. The right of  
27 a person to prompt an equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder will not be  
28 impaired by a person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this complaint procedure is not a  
29 prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies, and use of this complaint procedure does not  
30 extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies.

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32 A complaint is appropriate under this policy when an individual believes the District, its  
33 Board of Trustees, or an employee of the District, has violated the individual's rights or  
34 the rights of their child under state or federal law or Board policy. A complaint is not  
35 appropriate and therefore subject to dismissal when the basis for the complaint is  
36 disagreement with an action or omission of the District under circumstances where there  
37 has been no violation of the individual's rights or the rights of their child. Complaints  
38 against a building administrator shall be filed with the Superintendent or designee.  
39 Complaints against the Superintendent shall be filed with the Board. Attempts to bypass  
40 this Uniform Complaint Procedure at any of its Levels shall be redirected by District  
41 officials at the appropriate Level.

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43 Deadlines requiring District action in this procedure may be extended for reasons related  
44 but not limited to the District's retention of legal counsel and District investigatory  
45 procedures.

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**Level 1: Informal Problem Solving**

An individual with a complaint is strongly encouraged to first attempt to resolve the complaint by discussing it with the appropriate employee, supervisor or administrator with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally in accordance with Policy 2158. If such resolution is not possible, the individual may choose to file a formal written complaint in accordance with specifications at Level 3. If, however, the complaint involves allegations of sexual harassment, informal resolution with the alleged harasser is not encouraged, a sexual harassment complaint should be submitted instead.

**Level 2: Informal Principal District Administrator Problem Solving**

If the complaint is not resolved at Level 1, the individual should consult with the principal of the school, or supervisor of the program/department. The principal or supervisor shall investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint.

If the principal or supervisor is not able to remedy the situation satisfactorily, the individual should contact the appropriate District Administrator. The District Administrator may meet with the parties involved and seek support from other staff and administration as appropriate in working to resolve the matter.

**Level 3: Formal Written Complaint**

If the complaint is not remedied successfully at Level 2, the individual may file a formal written complaint stating: 1) a description of the event(s) or incident(s) giving rise to the complaint, including the approximate date, time, and location of the event(s) or incident(s); 2) and explanation of the rights the complaining party believes to have been violated; and 3) the remedy or resolution requested. The written complaint must be signed and filed with the appropriate District Administrator within thirty (30) calendar days of the event or incident, or within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the complainant could reasonably become aware of the matter. The applicability of the deadline is subject to review by the Superintendent to ensure the intent of this Uniform Complaint Procedure is honored.

The District Administrator shall further study and attempt to resolve the complaint.

If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed has reason to believe the Level 3 decision was made in error, the complaint may advance to Level 4 by requesting in writing that the Superintendent review the decision. This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within fifteen (15) calendar days of the District Administrator's decision.

**Level 4: Superintendent Review and Decision**

If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed appeals the administrator's decision provided for in Level 3, the Superintendent will review the

1 complaint and the administrator's decision. The Superintendent will respond in writing to  
2 the appeal, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Superintendent's receipt of the written  
3 appeal. In responding to the appeal, the Superintendent may: 1) meet with the parties  
4 involved in the complaint; 2) conduct a separate or supplementary investigation; 3)  
5 engage an outside investigator or other District employees to assist with the appeal;  
6 and/or; 4) take other steps appropriate or helpful in resolving the complaint.

7  
8 If either the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is filed has reason to  
9 believe the Superintendent's decision was made in error, either may request in writing  
10 that the Board consider an appeal of the Superintendent's decision. See Level 5 below.  
11 This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15)  
12 calendar days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission  
13 to the Board.

#### 14 15 **Level 5: The Board**

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17 Upon written appeal of a complaint alleging a violation of the individual's rights under  
18 state or federal law or Board policy which the Board of Trustees has authority to remedy,  
19 the Board may consider the Superintendent's decision. It is the role of the Board to  
20 review the decision of the Superintendent for compliance with applicable District  
21 policies. It is not the role of the Board to reinvestigate the matter, and the Board is  
22 entitled to rely upon the facts determined during an investigation conducted at Level 4.

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24 Upon receipt of written request of appeal, the Chairperson will either: (1) place the  
25 appeal on the agenda of a regular or special Board meeting, (2) appoint an appeals panel  
26 of not less than three Trustees to hear the appeal and make a recommendation to the  
27 Board, or (3) respond to the complaint with an explanation of why the appeal will not be  
28 heard by the Board of Trustees in accordance with this policy.

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30 If the Chairperson appoints a panel to consider the appeal, the panel will meet to consider  
31 the appeal and then make a written recommendation to the full Board. The Board will  
32 report its decision on the appeal, in writing, to all parties, within thirty (30) calendar days  
33 of the Board meeting at which the Board considered the appeal or the recommendation of  
34 the panel. If the matter is heard by the Board or by an appeals panel, the Board shall have  
35 the authority to uphold the decision of the Superintendent; to reverse the decision of the  
36 Superintendent; to remand the case back to the Superintendent for further investigation;  
37 or any combination of the above.

#### 38 39 **Complaint of Sexual Harassment, or Violations of Title IX, Title II or Section 504:**

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41 If a complaint alleges sexual harassment or a violation of Title IX of the Education  
42 Amendments of 1972 (the Civil Rights Act), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities  
43 Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the building administrator  
44 or Executive Director may turn the complaint over to a District nondiscrimination  
45 coordinator. The coordinator will complete an investigation and file a report and  
46 recommendation with the Superintendent. A coordinator may request of the

1 Superintendent that an independent investigator be hired to conduct the investigation.  
 2 Within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's receipt of the coordinator's or  
 3 independent investigator's report and recommendation, the Superintendent will respond  
 4 to the complaint and take such administrative steps as the Superintendent deems  
 5 appropriate and necessary. If either the complainant or the person against whom the  
 6 complaint is filed feels the Superintendent's decision was made in error, either may  
 7 request, in writing, that the Board consider an appeal of the Superintendent's decision.  
 8 This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15)  
 9 calendar days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission  
 10 to the Board.

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12 Cross Reference:

13	Policy 1400	Board Meetings
14	Policy 1420	School Board Meeting Procedure
15	Policy 1420P	Notice Regarding Public Comment
16	Policy 2131	Student and Family Privacy Rights
17	Policy 2158	Family Engagement Policy
18	Policy 2309	School Library Program
19	Policy 2310F1	Citizens Request for Reconsideration of Library Material
20	Policy 2311	Instructional Materials
21	Policy 2314	Instructional or Library Material Review
22	Policy 2314F	School/Library Request for Reconsideration of Material
23		Form
24	Policy 2330	Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom
25	Policy 3125	Education of Homeless Children
26	Policy 3125NF	Dispute Resolution Form - Homeless
27	Policy 3210	Equal Education, Nondiscrimination and Sex Equity
28	Policy 3215	Uniform Complaint Procedure
29	Policy 4310	Public Complaints
30	Policy 3225	Sexual Harassment of Students
31	Policy 3225P	Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure
32	Policy 3226	Hazing/Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying
33	Policy 4310	Public Complaints
34	Policy 4316	Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities
35	Policy 5002	Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities
36	Policy 5010	Equal Employment Opportunity Non-Discrimination
37	Policy 5012	Sexual Harassment Complaints
38	Policy 5125	Whistleblowing and Retaliation
39	Policy 5215	Uniform Complaint Procedure
40	Policy 5240	Resolution of Staff Complaints

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42 Legal Reference:

43 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Civil Rights Act)

1 Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990  
2 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973  
3 §20-20-108, MCA Rescheduling of School Election Canceled Due to  
4 Declaration of State of Emergency or Disaster  
5 §20-3-210, MCA Controversy Appeals and Hearings  
6 § 20-3-323, MCA District Policy and Records of Acts  
7 10.55.701, ARM Board of Trustees  
8 Title 10 Chapter 6 ARM Rules of Procedure for All School Controversy Contested  
9 Cases Before the County Superintendent

10 Procedure History:

11 Adopted on: January 14, 2013  
12 Revised on: June 26, 2017  
13 Revised on: June 24, 2019  
14 Revised on: August 21, 2023  
15 Revised on: February 23, 2026