



## Guide to Navigating the District Complaint Process

This guide is designed to help parents and guardians understand the steps, rules, and appropriate channels for filing a complaint. The district's complaint process aims to resolve disagreements at the lowest possible level, ensuring impartiality and a fair review of information at every stage. If a complaint, appeal, or grievance advances past the first level, the purpose of the superintendent and board is to review the concern to ensure compliance to policy.

### Communication during the Process

To ensure your complaint is heard fairly and without interference, **communication must be strictly limited to the designated hearing officer for your current level.**

- **Level One:** Limit all communication to the **campus-level administrator** assigned to hear your complaint.
- **Level Two:** Limit all communication to the **district-level hearing officer (in most cases the superintendent)** assigned to your case.
- **Level Three:** Limit all communication to the **school board and district-level administration** facilitating the hearing. All necessary communication should be directed to [alee@newcaneyisd.org](mailto:alee@newcaneyisd.org). She will facilitate scheduling meetings and relaying communication to the Board.

**Important Note on Impartiality:** Involving staff outside of the appropriate level interferes with the process. For example, if you are in the middle of a Level One appeal, emailing the superintendent or board members may interfere with their ability to serve as a future hearing officer.

### Gathering and Submitting Information

Gathering facts is a crucial part of the process, but there are strict rules regarding how and when information can be submitted.



1. **Start at the Campus:** The campus is your primary source for gathering information regarding your complaint.
2. **Submit a Public Information Request (PIR):** If you feel there is information/records the campus could not provide, you may initiate a formal request by emailing [PIR@newcaneyisd.org](mailto:PIR@newcaneyisd.org). *(Note: The district adheres to all FERPA privacy guidelines when fulfilling these requests).*
3. **Finalize Your Record Early: No new items or evidence may be added to the record once a Level One complaint has been heard.** Ensure you have gathered and submitted all relevant information during the Level One stage. It is possible that the district could add additional information or seek clarification at the parent's request during the process.

## Timelines and Limitations

- **Timelines:** The official timeline for the complaint process is outlined in [Board Policy FNG \(Local\)](#).
  - Upon receipt of your complaint, the appropriate personnel will date-stamp and sign (if received in person) or respond if sent electronically.
  - The day the complaint is received will be “day zero” in the process.
- **Disciplinary Decisions:** The complaint process helps resolve disagreements over district decisions, but appeals have limits. Depending on the issue, most disciplinary appeals will conclude at **Level Two**, while some conclude at **Level One (FNG (Local))**.
- **Informal Resolution:** Depending on the nature of your complaint, you may receive a call from someone on the Administrative Services team. Per board policy, this team member may make attempts at an informal resolution.
- **Guidance:** Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct and board policy to determine the appropriate appeal pathway and consequence levels for specific misbehaviors.

## Specialized Policies and Procedures

Certain issues fall outside the standard complaint process and are governed by specialized policies. If your concern involves any of the following, please refer to the designated policy:



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- **Special Education:** Identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability — *Policies EHBA and FOE (Notice of Procedural Safeguards)*
- **Safe School Transfers:** Requesting a transfer to attend a safe public school — *Policy FDD (LOCAL)*
- **Attendance:** Loss of credit due to excessive absences — *Policy FEC*
- **Teacher Removals:** Removal of a student by a teacher for disciplinary reasons — *Policy FOA and the Student Code of Conduct*
- **DAEP:** Removal of a student to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program — *Policy FOC and the Student Code of Conduct*
- **Expulsion:** Expulsion of a student — *Policy FOD and the Student Code of Conduct*
- **Gender Discrimination:** Discrimination on the basis of gender — *Policy FB*
- **Harassment:** Harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, or disability — *Policy DIA and FFH and the Student Code of Conduct*
- **Sexual Abuse/Harassment:** Sexual abuse or sexual harassment of a student — *Policy FFH and the Student Code of Conduct*
- **Instructional Materials:** Concerns regarding instructional materials — *Policy EFA*
- **Non-School Materials:** On-campus distribution of non-school materials to students — *Policy FNAA*
- **District Police:** Complaints against District peace officers — *Policy CKE*