1300 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES POLICY

A. Rationale

The Learning Community Charter School("School") recognizes and respects the integral roles that parents and teachers play in the education of its students. The Board's objective is to strengthen that partnership and foster an open and productive line of communication between not only parents and teachers, but also the Head of School, administrative staff, and the 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 Board employee, trustee, or parent/guardian has a complaint or dispute with any Board policy or action of a school employee or trustee ("grievance"), it should be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution proceedings set forth in this Policy, or as otherwise mandated by law or an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

B. Procedure

1) Informal Grievances.

A) Any person who has a grievance shall discuss it first with the Head of School , in an attempt to resolve the matter informally, within ten (10) school days from the time when the person knew or would have known of its occurrence.

B) However, should a complaint or concern arise between a parent and a teacher or staff member, parents are encouraged to first attempt to resolve said complaint or concern directly with the teacher or staff member by scheduling a conference to discuss the issue. The Head of School reserves the right to redirect parents to the involved teacher or staff member if that step has not been taken. If, after meeting in conference with the immediate source, the parent deems the initial response/course of action insufficient, or in the event that a meeting with the immediate source is not practicable or reasonable because of the nature or subject matter of the grievance, an informal meeting with the Head of School may be requested in an attempt to resolve the concern or complaint.

C) If the complainant is satisfied with the response of the Head of School, no further action will be required, and the grievance will be considered resolved.

2) **Formal Grievances.** If the grievance is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction through informal discussion with the Head of School, the complainant must submit a formal, written grievance to both the Head of School and the Board Secretary within five (5) school days after meeting with the Head of School. The written grievance must recite the matter that was originally submitted informally to the Head of School, explain the basis for the complainant's dissatisfaction with the decision previously rendered, and specify the desired remedy.

3) **Referral to Committee.** The Board Secretary and Board Chair shall determine, upon consultation with counsel if necessary, whether the nature of the grievance requires that it be considered by the Board Grievance Committee, the Advisory Grievance Committee pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-15, or per a grievance process in an applicable collective bargaining agreement. The jurisdictional limits of each committee are described below in their applicable sections.

4) **Committee Meetings.** Within fifteen (15) school days of its receipt of the written grievance, the applicable committee will meet with all concerned parties. The Board will provide an opportunity to the complainant to present his or her grievance and to persons responding to the grievance ("respondents"). These presentations will be informal as no sworn testimony will be given. There will be no right to cross-examine witnesses. Whether the presentation is held in public or private session of a Board meeting will depend on the subject matter of the grievance.

5) **Resolution.** Soon thereafter, the applicable committee shall present 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 decision within thirty (30) days of its receipt of the applicable committee's recommendation.

C. Advisory Grievance Committee

1) **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.

2) **Composition.** The Chair of the Advisory Grievance Committee will be selected by the other Advisory Grievance Committee members. If an Advisory

Grievance 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 and a designee replacement shall serve.

D. Board Grievance Committee

1) Jurisdiction. The Board Grievance Committee shall consider grievances related to all other matters not otherwise excluded here or that are subject to the Advisory Grievance Committee's jurisdiction set forth in section (c) above. However, the Board Grievance Committee reserves the right to decline to review grievances that it deems to fall primarily under the purview of the managerial discretion of the Head of School. In such event, the Board Grievance Committee shall work in conjunction with the Head of School in an advisory capacity. Grievances arising specifically under the school laws may be subject to review and consideration by the Commissioner of Education only.

2) Composition. The Board Grievance Committee shall consist of the Board Chair and two (2) other trustees selected by the Board. The term of service for the trustees shall be one (1) year. 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.

E. Other General Guidelines for Grievances

1) A complainant or respondent may represent himself/herself at all stages of the grievance proceeding or may be represented by the person of his or her choosing.

2) There shall be no retaliation against any person for initiating a grievance proceeding.

3) The information gathered in a grievance proceeding shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible and as mandated by law.

4) This grievance process shall not be applied to change the allocation of responsibilities between the Head of School (to administer the school) and the Board (to set policy and oversee the administration of the school.)

5) This Policy does not affect any grievance provisions in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, which shall be given effect per that collective bargaining agreement.

Adopted: June 11, 2026