

LINE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

ADOPTED: July 26, 2005

REVISED: April 23, 2019

<p>906. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS</p>	
<p>1. Purpose</p>	<p>The Board welcomes inquiries, suggestions, and constructive criticism from parents/guardians, district residents or community groups regarding the district’s programs, personnel, operations and facilities. The Board adopts this policy to establish procedures for seeking appropriate resolution to complaints.</p>
<p>2. Authority</p>	<p>Any parent, resident or community group shall have the right to present a request, suggestion or complaint concerning district personnel, programs, or operations of the district. At the same time, the Board has a duty to protect its staff from unnecessary harassment. It is the Board's intent to provide a fair and impartial manner for seeking appropriate remedies.</p> <p>The Board encourages parents/guardians, district residents or community groups who have general complaints about Board policy and district procedures, district programs, personnel, operations and facilities to follow the general complaint procedure established in this policy.</p> <p>The Board directs parents/guardians, other individuals and organizations alleging violations of law in the district's administration of federally-funded programs to submit complaints in accordance with the separate federal program complaint procedure established in this policy.</p> <p>The Board shall ensure that this policy is posted on the district's publicly accessible website in accordance with law.</p>
<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>The district shall annually notify parents/guardians, employees and the public of this policy and established complaint procedures via the district website, newsletters, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods.</p>
<p>4. Guidelines</p>	<p><u>STEP ONE</u></p> <p>1. The first step in the process shall be a meeting to discuss the issue or concern. The following individuals shall be in attendance:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. The complainant (and a representative, if requested).</p>

- b. The staff member against whom the complaint has been raised.
- c. The immediate area supervisor and/or the principal.
- d. Any other individuals with knowledge of the complaint; i.e., witnesses, guidance personnel, school nurse, etc.

If a resolution is reached, the process shall end and the matter shall be considered closed.

STEP TWO

- 2. If no resolution is reached after STEP 1 above, more information is to be gathered, the Superintendent is to be notified, and a conference with the same individuals set forth in STEP 1 is to be held. The Superintendent shall be present, if expedient is desired.
 - a. The additional information to be gathered shall consist of two (2) written statements, one in which the complainant sets forth issue, problem or concern, and the other in which the staff member responds.
 - b. In addition, the building principal or area supervisor shall present in writing an assessment of the situation along with any corrective action taken or proposed.
 - c. The matter shall be reviewed, discussed, and resolved, if possible.
 - d. A copy of this discussion shall be filed in the building principal's office.

STEP THREE

- 3. If the issue, problem or concern has not been resolved in either STEP 1 or STEP 2, a written complaint specifically setting forth the issue problem or concern may be filed with the Board, with a review and action, if any, based on the information gathered in STEP 1 or STEP 2. If requested, the Board may hold an informational hearing to review the issue, problem or concern and shall render a decision, which shall be final.

Board members are advised to refer complains for processing through the chain of command.

IMPORTANT EXCEPTIONS:

- 1. Members of the Board are directed to refer any issues, problems or concerns

which are brought to them outside the format of this policy to the appropriate staff member for processing in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

2. Issues, problems or concerns which raise legal issues or significantly impact the health, safety and welfare of students or staff members should be referred immediately to the Superintendent and to the other proper agency in accordance with then existing statutes, regulations and policies, for investigation, and resolution, if practical, prior to processing under the policy.

Complaint Procedure for Federal Programs

Complaints alleging violations of law in the district's administration of federally-funded programs shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure.

The complainant shall submit a written, signed statement to the district's administration office that includes:

1. Contact information of the individual or organization filing the complaint.
2. Alleged federal program violation.
3. Facts supporting the alleged violation.
4. Supporting documentation, such as information on discussions, correspondence or meetings with district staff regarding the complaint.

District staff shall forward complaints to the district administrator responsible for federal programs, who will notify the Superintendent and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing.

The district administrator responsible for federal programs shall conduct an independent investigation, which may include, but not be limited to:

1. On-site visit to the building that is the subject of the complaint.
2. Opportunity to present evidence by all individuals and/or organizations involved.
3. Opportunity for participants to ask questions of each other and witnesses.

When the investigation is completed, the district administrator responsible for federal programs shall prepare a written report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The report shall include:

1. Name of the individual or organization filing the complaint.
2. Nature of the complaint.
3. Summary of the investigation.

4. Recommended resolution.
5. Reasons for the recommended resolution.

The district administrator responsible for federal programs shall submit the written report to the Superintendent, who will determine whether further investigation is required and/or the district's final response.

All individuals and/or organizations making the complaint or that are the subject of the complaint shall be notified of the resolution of the complaint by the Superintendent or designee.

The district administrator responsible for federal programs shall ensure that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.

The time period between receipt and resolution of a complaint shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days, unless circumstances require additional time.

The complainant may appeal the final resolution to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Division Chief
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