

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Any resident or community group has the right to present a request, suggestion, or complaint concerning district personnel, the program, or the operations of the district. The Board believes that complaints are best heard and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that staff members should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the School Board. The Board also has the duty to protect its staff from unnecessary harassment. It is the intent of this policy to provide a fair and impartial manner for seeking appropriate remedies.

Any misunderstandings between the public and the school district shall be resolved by direct discussions of an informal type among the interested parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve the differences that more formal procedures will be employed.

The proper channeling of complaints is:

- Teacher/Classified Employee/Coach
- Activities Director (if applicable)
- Principal
- Superintendent
- School Board

If a complaint that was presented to the School Board and referred back through the proper channels is resolved before it comes back to the School Board, a written report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the School Board and then placed in the official school files.

The School Board expects the staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complaint.

Matters referred to the Administration and/or School Board must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

Exceptions to this policy may be made only when the complaining concerns School Board actions or operations.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Step 1: The individual/group will meet with the appropriate staff member in an attempt to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the individual/group may move to Step 2 by putting the complaint in writing and submitting it to the principal.

The principal will give a copy of the complaint to the staff member. The staff member must respond in writing within five working days after receiving a copy of the complaint. A working day is defined as a day when teachers are required to be at work. Work days during the summer vacation shall be defined as Monday-Friday, excluding holidays.

Step 2: The principal will meet with the individual/group and the staff member, individually or jointly, in an attempt to resolve the problem. If a resolution agreeable to both parties is reached, a report and implementation procedure will be made in writing to the principal and delivered to the superintendent. If no agreement is reached, the principal will render a decision in writing within 10 working school days.

A copy of the decision will be given to the individual/group, the staff member, and the superintendent. Within 20 working school days, either party may go to step 3.

Step 3: The written complaint, with the principal's action, is given to the superintendent. The superintendent will meet with the individual/group, the staff member, and the principal, individually or jointly. If resolution is reached, the superintendent will write a report and provide a copy to the individual/group, the staff member, and the principal. If no agreement is reached, the superintendent will render a decision in writing within 10 working days and deliver it to the individual/group, the staff member, the principal, and the School Board. Within 20 working school days, either party may go to Step 4 by notifying the superintendent.

Step 4: The School Board will consider the complaint while meeting in executive session. The School Board will make every effort to conduct the meeting in a fair and just manner. Generally, all parties involved will be asked to attend such a meeting for the purposes of presenting additional facts, making further explanations, and clarifying the issues. The Board may request a disinterested third party act as a moderator.

The superintendent will provide the Board with written copies of the complaint, the staff member's response, the principal's decision, and the superintendent's decision. At the hearing, the individual/group making the complaint will explain the complaint; the superintendent will explain the administration's response.

The School Board will render its decision, which will be implemented by the superintendent. The individual/group making the complaint or the staff member may appeal this decision within 90 days to the Circuit Court as per SDCL 13-46.

Adopted: September 12, 2005

Amended: March 25, 2008

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION FORM

Name of Complainant

Address

Phone #

Please complete the following information and respond to all questions. Attach additional pages, if necessary.

Please state or describe your concerns, being as specific as possible as to times, events, people involved, etc.

Please list or describe the action, which you feel is necessary or required to resolve this situation.

Signature

Date