

**Regulation**

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COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES

All complaints and grievances addressed to the Egg Harbor City Board of Education, board members individually, school officials, or district staff members shall be referred to the superintendent for consideration in accordance with the following procedures.

**A. Complaints Regarding a Teaching Staff Member Other Than Administrator**

**First Level**

1. The complainant will be directed to address the matter to the staff member;
2. The staff member will be directed to discuss the matter directly with the complainant and to make every reasonable effort to explain the difficulty and/or take appropriate action in accordance with district regulations and within his/her authority and district regulations;
3. The staff member will report the matter, and whatever action may have been taken to resolve the matter, to the principal.

**Second Level**

1. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the first level, the complainant may discuss the matter with the principal;
2. The principal will take all reasonable and prudent steps to resolve the complaint or to explain to the complainant why the matter cannot be resolved as the complainant wishes.

**Third Level**

1. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the second level, the complainant may submit to the superintendent a written request for a conference. The request shall include:
  - a. The specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it;
  - b. The respect in which it is alleged that the complainant or the complainant's child has been unfairly treated or adversely affected; and
  - c. The remedy sought by the complainant.
2. The superintendent shall conduct a conference, at a time convenient to the complainant, and attempt to resolve the matter informally. The time for conference will be extended if the complainant is unable to schedule a convenient meeting;
3. The superintendent shall record in writing his/her disposition of the complaint.

**Fourth Level**

1. A complaint that is not resolved by conference with the superintendent or that seeks a remedy beyond the superintendent's jurisdiction may be appealed to the board of education;
2. The complainant may, upon receipt of the superintendent's written disposition, submit a written request for a hearing before the board. The request will include a copy of the superintendent's disposition at **Level 3**;
3. The board shall review the appeal and if it is the decision of the board to support the disposition of **Level 3** by the superintendent, no board hearing shall be conducted. The complainant shall be informed in writing of the decision of the board;
4. The board shall conduct an informal hearing, in which the complainant will present his/her complaint when the board disagrees with the disposition at **Level 3** or the board requires more information. The board may, on the petition of the complainant, permit the examination of witnesses. The board may

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- permit the teaching staff member complained of to testify in his/her own behalf;
- 5. The board shall advise the complainant in writing of the board's disposition of the complaint;
- 6. The complainant will be advised that the board's decision may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education.

Reasonable efforts will be made to expedite a complaint that arises at the end of the school year so that the matter can be resolved before the interruption of summer vacations.

**B. Complaints about an Administrative Staff Member**

- 1. The procedure set forth in "A" above will be followed and the complainant will be directed to discuss the matter first with the administrator;
- 2. A complaint about a principal or a central office administrator will omit **Level 2** of the complaint procedure. Appeal of the **Level 1** discussion between the complainant and the administrative staff member involved will be made directly to the superintendent in according to the procedures for **Level 3**.

**C. Complaints About a Support Staff Member**

- 1. The procedure set forth in "A" above will be followed and the complainant will be directed to discuss the matter first with the support staff member;
- 2. Appeal at **Level 2** of the complaint procedure will be to the support staff member's supervisor;
- 3. A complaint about a support staff supervisor will omit the second level of the complaint procedure. Appeal of **Level 1** discussion will be made directly to the superintendent (**Level 3**).

**D. Complaints About a Program, Practice, or Operation**

- 1. A complaint directed to a matter of district or school policy, procedure, program, or operation, including entitlement programs established by state or federal law, should be addressed, initially, to the administrator or department head most directly concerned with the matter, according to procedure for **Level 1**;
- 2. A complaint that cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the first level may be appealed to the superintendent and, thereafter, the board in accordance with the procedures set forth in **Level 3** and **Level 4**.

**E. Complaints About Instructional and Resource Materials**

- 1. Complaints about textbooks, library books, reference works, and other instructional materials used in the district will be made in writing and submitted to the superintendent.
- 2. The complainant will complete and sign a complaint form that will include:
  - a. The title, author, and publisher of the work complained of,
  - b. The specific portions or language complained of (by page and item),
  - c. The complainant's familiarity with the work objected to,
  - d. The reasons for the objection,
  - e. The pupils or class for whom the work is intended, and
  - f. The way in which the work is used.
- 3. The superintendent may appoint a review committee to evaluate the complaint and review the material objected to.
- 4. The committee will report its findings and recommendations to the superintendent. Should the superintendent recommend action, such recommendation will be forwarded to the board of education.
- 5. The board will receive the report of the committee with such recommendation. If the board acts to remove the work complained of or to limit access to the work, a statement of reasons for the removal or limitation will accompany its action.
- 6. A copy of the committee's report and the board's action, if any, will be given to the complainant.
- 7. The complainant will be informed that a decision of the board may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education.

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*Note: The board shall hear as required by law any appeals made to the board for short and long term suspension, mandatory removal of students (drug/alcohol possession and weapons) and harassment, intimidation and bullying.*

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