

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Constructive criticism of the schools is welcomed by the district when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the education program and to help the school personnel in performing their tasks more effectively.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the board as a whole or to an individual board member, the individual or group involved will be advised to take the concern to the appropriate staff member and the administrator in charge.

The board believes that complaints and grievances are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the board.

The proper channeling of complaints is as follows:

1. The complainant should discuss the complaint in a timely manner with the personnel involved and the administrator in charge.
2. If, after informal discussion with the staff member and the administrator in charge, the complainant is not satisfied, the complainant may fill out the formal complaint form and submit it to the administrator in charge. The administrator then will respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) days.
3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the written disposition of the matter by the administrator in charge, the complainant may, within ten (10) days after receiving the written response, appeal the matter to the superintendent, who will read the written complaint and the administrator's written response and will meet with the complainant if requested. The superintendent then will respond in writing to the complaint within ten (10) days of receipt.
(Note: A complainant may bring an informal complaint to the superintendent after having the informal discussion with the staff member and administrator in charge, but if this does not resolve the matter, it is required that the complaint form be filed with the administrator in charge before the superintendent will render a formal decision.)
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the written response of the superintendent, the complainant may, within ten (10) days after receiving the written response, request placement of the complaint on the agenda of the next regular board meeting. In considering the complaint, the Board will review the written complaint and the written responses of the administrator in charge and the superintendent as well as listen to oral presentation if appropriate. The board will render its decision by majority vote and respond in writing within ten (10) days of the meeting.

Exceptions to this policy will be made when the complaints concern board actions or board operations only. If the complainant fails to follow the timelines given above, the complaint will be considered to be resolved. If the principal fails to render a written response in a timely manner, the complaint may be appealed to the superintendent. If the superintendent fails to render a written response in a timely manner, the complaint may be appealed to the board. Copies of the district complaint form will be available in the offices of all administrators. A complainant will be given a copy of this policy along with the complaint form.

For purposes of the timelines stated in this policy a "day" refers to a day that school is in session, except that during the summer it refers to regular working days that the Business Office is open.

Public Complaint of Federal Programs and Homeless Programs

The time may arise when a parent/guardian, student, employee, or district stakeholder may have concerns about the Federal Programs (such as the use of federal NCLB funds). These concerns may also address the enrollment and/or other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. If such case arises, the complainant should begin the proper channel of complaints (1) by discussing the complaint in a timely manner with the district's federal programs director. The channel of complaints will follow that of Public Complaints. If at the end of the process the complainant feels the complaint is unresolved, he/she/they may forward the complaint to the South Dakota Department of Education.

Adopted by the Board of Education 7/6/11

For further information or any questions, please contact the Superintendent:

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