

THE TERRELL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM'S COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Section 1 - Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to provide local procedures for the resolution of complaints and/or grievances made to the Terrell County School System by parents, students, employees, citizens, or other concerned organizations or individuals when an alleged violation of federal or state statutes, regulations, or policies is made. This procedure will be appropriate for all policies, statutes and regulations.

Complaint - A complainant's informal expression of dissatisfaction, which has not been resolved to his/her satisfaction through informal discussion with the immediate supervisor or the school principal.

Grievance - A complainant's formal, written statement of dissatisfaction through informal discussion with the immediate supervisor or the school principal.

Section 2 - Purpose

The purpose of administrative review procedures is to serve, at the lowest possible level, proper and equitable solutions to complaints and grievances, and to guarantee orderly succession of procedures within which solutions may be pursued. It shall be incumbent upon all complainants to follow these procedures to settle grievances.

Section 3 - Procedure

1. Since it is important to good relationships that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, every effort will be made by all parties to expedite the following process.
2. If a decision at Step 1 is not appealed to the next step of the procedure within the time limit specified, the grievance will be deemed to be discontinued and further appeal shall be barred; however, another complaint may be submitted upon reoccurrence of the grievance.
3. Except for informal decisions at Step 1, all decisions shall be rendered in writing at each step of the review procedure, setting forth facts, reasons, and conclusions for decision. Both parties shall agree that the proceedings will be kept confidential as may be appropriate at each step. The complaint must be in writing and must be signed.
4. The failure of an administrator to communicate his/her decisions to the complainant within the specified time limit shall permit the complainant to proceed to the next step in the administrative review procedure.

Step 1 - Informal

The complainant should hold an informal discussion with or complain to a neutral party or the official designee in an effort to resolve the problem informally. The official should permit the complainant to state his/her position, and, if necessary, make inquiry of the complaint. If as a result of the informal discussion with or complain to the school principal or immediate supervisor in an effort to resolve the problem informally. The complainant may have present a parent, friend, school official or teacher.

Step 2 - Formal

If, as a result of the informal discussion, the matter is not resolved, the complainant shall initiate in writing to the school principal or immediate supervisor within five days after meeting with the school principal or immediate supervisor giving the full details of his/her grievance.

The school principal or immediate supervisor shall communicate his decision to the complainant in writing within three school days after receipt of the written grievance.

Step 3

If the grievance remains unsolved, the complainant, no later than five school days after receipt of the decision at Step 2, may appeal it to the superintendent.

The appeal must be made in writing and must give details as to why the decision was unsatisfactory.

The superintendent or contact person will conduct a thorough investigation of the charge and forward a written reply to the aggrieved person(s).

The superintendent shall give his decision in writing to the complainant within ten days after submission of the appeal. The reply will include proof that denies the charge or procedures to be followed to remedy a charge that is granted.

Step 4

If the grievance is not resolved at Step 3, the complainant may, no later than ten school days after receipt of the superintendent's decision, appeal to the full board of education.

The request shall be made in writing and all papers relating to the grievance shall be attached. The complainant must explain who was discriminated against; in what way; by whom or by what institution; when the discrimination took place; who was harmed; who can be contacted for further information; the name, address, and telephone number of the complainant and recipient; and as much background information as possible about the alleged violation.

Within ten school days after receipt of an appeal, the full board of education shall hold a hearing with all parties concerned present on the grievance.

The hearing shall be conducted in the executive session providing an opportunity for the complainant or the complainant's representative, or both, to present evidence, including an opportunity to question parties involved; or designate a tribunal to hear the case and furnish the board of education with findings of fact and conclusions of law.

The board of education shall issue a decision in writing to all parties concerned in a period not to exceed thirty (30) days from the date of filing the complaint.

Step 5

Section 4 - Appeal

The complainant has the right to appeal the final resolution of the local board of education within thirty (30) days after receipt of the written decision.

The appeal shall be addressed to the State Superintendent of Schools in writing. It shall include a copy of the original complaint with the unresolved item(s) clearly identified.

OR

Anyone who believes there has been an act of discrimination may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department Of Education. A complaint should be sent to the Atlanta Regional Office, P.O. Box 1705, Atlanta, GA 30301. --- A complaint must be in writing and must be signed.

A complaint must also be filed within one hundred (100) days of the date the alleged discrimination, unless the time for filing is extended, for good cause, by the Regional Civil Rights Director. (See Step 4, Paragraph 2 under Procedure for guidance).

Section 5 - Information

This policy and procedure shall be disseminated to parents, students, employees, citizens, or other concerned organizations or individuals.

All complaints and grievances concerning violations of Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act regulations should be directed to:

Mr. Robert Aaron, Superintendent of Schools
P.O. Box 151
Dawson, GA 39842
Telephone - (229) 995-4425

Mrs. Tonya Perkins, Contact Person
Central Office Personnel
P.O. Box 142
Dawson, GA 39842
Telephone - (229) 995-4096

*The contact person is the objective party who will take the concerns and make recommendations to the superintendent.