

SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: COMMUNITY

TITLE: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

ADOPTED:

REVISED: April 14, 2008

<p>1. Authority</p> <p>2. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">906. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS</p> <p>Any parent/guardian, 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>Any misunderstandings between the public and the school district shall be resolved by informal, direct discussions among the interested parties. Only when informal meetings fail to resolve the differences shall more formal procedures be employed.</p> <p>Any requests, suggestions or complaints reaching individual Board members and the Board shall be referred to the Superintendent for consideration and action. If further action is warranted, based on the initial investigation, such action shall be in accordance with established guidelines.</p> <p><u>Matters Regarding A Professional Staff Member</u></p> <p>First Level - A matter specifically directed toward a professional staff member shall be addressed initially to the concerned staff member, who shall discuss it with the complainant and make every effort to provide a reasoned explanation or take appropriate action within his/her authority. As appropriate, the staff member shall report the matter and the resolution to the building principal or immediate supervisor.</p> <p>Second Level - If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the first level, it shall be discussed by the complainant with the building principal.</p> <p>Third Level - If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by discussion with the building principal, the principal shall schedule a conference with the Superintendent or his/her designee. The principal will furnish to the Superintendent or his/her designee a report which will include the specific nature of the complaint and a brief</p>
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	<p>statement of relevant facts, the respect in which it is alleged that the complainant has been affected adversely, the action which the complainant requests and the reasons why such action should be taken.</p> <p>Fourth Level - Should the matter not be resolved by the Superintendent or is beyond his/her authority and requires Board action, the Superintendent shall provide the Board with a complete report.</p> <p>Final Level - The Board, after reviewing all material relative to the case, shall provide the complainant with its written decision and may grant a hearing before the Board or a committee of the Board.</p> <p>The complainant shall be advised of the Board's decision, in writing, no more than ten (10) days following the hearing.</p> <p><u>Matters Regarding An Administrative Staff Member</u></p>
Pol. 008	<p>In the case of a complaint directed toward an administrative staff member, the procedure specified in this policy shall be followed. The complaint shall be discussed initially with the person toward whom it is directed. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at the first level, the matter shall be brought to higher levels in accordance with the organizational chart of the school district, terminating with the School Board.</p> <p><u>Matters Regarding A Classified Staff Member</u></p> <p>In the case of a complaint directed toward a classified staff member, the procedure specified in this policy shall be followed. The complaint shall be discussed initially with the person to whom it is directed. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at the first level, the matter shall be discussed with the person's supervisor and then brought to higher levels in accordance with the organizational chart of the school district, terminating with the School Board.</p> <p><u>Matters Regarding A Program, Operation Or Instructional Materials</u></p> <p>The following procedure should be followed for consideration of and action on criticism of courses of study, textbooks and materials by individuals or groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All criticism shall be presented in writing to the Superintendent.2. The materials or program shall then be reviewed by the curriculum directors along with a committee of teachers and librarians, if a library book is in question, appointed by the Superintendent.

<p>20 U.S.C. Sec. 7844</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. A report of the committee shall be forwarded with the complaint as soon as possible.4. A decision of the Board shall be sent in writing to the complainant.5. Objections to library books must be submitted on the form designated by the district. <p><u>Matters Regarding Student Progress And Well-Being</u></p> <p>In the case of a complaint directed toward this area, the general procedures specified in this policy shall be followed.</p> <p><u>NCLB Complaint Procedure</u></p> <p>Complaints alleging violations of law in the district's administration of NCLB education programs shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure.</p> <p>The complaint must be filed with the district as a written, signed statement that identifies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Alleged NCLB violation.2. Facts supporting the alleged violation.3. Supporting documentation, such as information on discussions, correspondence or meetings with the district regarding the complaint. <p>Complaints shall be referred to the Federal Programs Coordinator, who will notify the Superintendent or designee.</p> <p>The Federal Programs Coordinator will conduct an independent investigation, which could include but not be limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. On-site visit to the building that is the subject of the complaint.2. Opportunity to present information by all individuals and/or organizations involved.3. Opportunity for each side to question relevant witnesses.
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When the investigation is completed, the Federal Programs Coordinator will prepare a report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The report will 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 Federal Programs Coordinator will submit the report to the Superintendent or designee, who will determine whether further investigation is required and/or the district's final response. All parties involved in the complaint will be notified of the resolution of the complaint by the Superintendent.

The Federal Programs Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.

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

Either party may appeal the final resolution to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Division of Federal Programs
PA Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 510

No Child Left Behind Act – 20 U.S.C. Sec. 7844

Board Policy – 008