



# Grievance Policy For Parents/Students

## Board Policy 502

**Purpose:** To provide the procedures parents/students will follow when they have an issue at the School that constitutes a grievance.

This policy is in place to respond to parent/student grievances. Grievances may only come from current students or parents of current students. It is expected that any parent/student with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if a parent or student disagrees with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first level of grievance is their student's Teacher. If the student/parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then set a meeting with the grade-level administrator. At that meeting, the teacher, student, grade-level administrator and parent must be present and the issue at hand will be fully discussed. If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Executive Director. Similarly, if a parent/student disagrees or has an issue with a policy or procedure at the School, the parent/student should set a meeting with the Executive Director. If the parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Executive Director and the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many issues that a parent/student has with the classroom, teacher or School will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or grade-level administrator.

**Definition of a grievance:** a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a parent/student stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, or law/regulation, including Title VI. Complaints under Title IX, IDEA, Section 504, the School's Non-Title IX Bullying policy and those pertaining to student discipline are not grievances and this policy does not apply to such complaints. Please refer to the School's policies and procedures for those matters.

**Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen calendar days of the meeting with the Executive Director. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Executive Director.

**The grievance process is as follows:**

Step 1: If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, and the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the School policy, board policy or law/regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Executive Director of the School and to the Chair of the Board of Directors. If the Executive Director of the School is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should only be submitted to the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

Step 2: Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled board meeting provided such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the Chair of the Board of Directors may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with the School's bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance in accordance with Open Meetings laws. At that meeting the Board of Directors will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email accepted) if further action is necessary. If the board decides that it needs additional time to consider the grievance, gather information and/or conduct an investigation, it may defer its decision until another regularly scheduled board meeting or schedule a special meeting. At the Board's sole discretion, the Board may conduct an investigation and/or gather additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews or engagement of an investigator, if needed. At the meeting where the board makes a decision on the grievance, the board will give the individual filing the grievance or appeal the opportunity to attend the meeting. Once the board reaches a decision, the Board will communicate that decision to the individual who filed the grievance within five School days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final. The Board reserves the right to appoint a Board Panel to address the grievance. In such cases, the Board Panel's decision is final and there are no appeal rights to the Board.

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