

PARENT/SCHOOL/COMMUNITY GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Reference: ECBOE Policy 4.6, Adopted June 2013

Education is a shared responsibility among home, school and the surrounding community. The Elmore County Board of Education believes parents/guardians and community members have both the right and responsibility to express school-related concerns and grievances to school faculty and administration. Parents/guardians are always welcome to make appointments to discuss any concerns they may have regarding their child(ren). The faculty and administration will strive to resolve grievances at the school level **(at the lowest possible administrative level)**. It is expected that most grievances will be resolved satisfactorily at this level. However, in the event that the grievance cannot be settled by this procedure, then the parties involved may pursue the grievance to the Superintendent and then to the Board.

For the purpose of this procedure, a grievance is defined as a claim submitted by a student, parent/guardian of a student, or a community member of violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of local Board policy, local school rule/regulation, or local administrative procedure. A grievance is also a concern regarding identification, evaluation, eligibility, or services related to instructional programs within the school. The term "grievance" shall apply to matters which fall within the discretionary powers of the principal, Superintendent and/or Board but shall not apply to areas where the principal, Superintendent or Board has no authority to act.

The normal procedure usually followed by any parent/guardian or student regarding a personal grievance is to discuss the matter with a teacher or administrator directly involved. When the nature of the grievance dictates otherwise, the parent/guardian or student upon notifying the staff directly involved, may request a meeting with the school principal. Such meetings should be granted within five (5) working days at a reasonable time and place. A student expressing concern may request the presence of one faculty member of the student's choice or his/her parent/guardian(s) to be present at such meeting.

In an effort to resolve concerns prior to filing a formal grievance, the following steps should be taken:

1. The initial contact should be a school conference requested by the grievant(s) within 10 school days of the incident.
2. A *School Conference Report* should be completed by the school staff member and signed by all parties present.
3. In cases when a concern cannot be resolved through an informal conference at the local school level, the grievance procedure herein should be followed.

FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

For the purpose of this procedure, a grievance is defined as *a claim submitted by a parent/guardian, community member, or student regarding a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of local board policy, local school rule and regulation, or local administrative procedure, (i.e. matters concerning curriculum, sports, disciplinary problems, school calendar, classroom policy, etc.)* Incidents/issues *not* addressed in this grievance procedure are: grades, promotion, placement, Title I, Title IV, 504, and FERPA.

The following steps should be followed **sequentially** to file a grievance:

1. Principal

- a. A completed grievance form should be submitted to the principal within 10 school days of the conference that is the subject of the grievance. (This form may be obtained from the principal or Board of Education Office.)
- b. The school staff and involved parties are to be immediately given a copy of the completed form by the principal and given an opportunity to respond within 3 school days.
- c. The principal will request a copy of the *School Conference Report* within 10 school days of the written grievance, and the Principal shall provide a response.

2. Superintendent

- a. If the grievance is not resolved at level one, the grievant(s) may proceed to level two by submitting the original grievance with the principal's response, and the *School Conference Report* to the Superintendent's office within 5 school days of the principal's decision.
- b. The Superintendent or his/her designee will review the principal's decision and may arrange for a meeting to review the situation.
- c. The Superintendent may refer the grievant(s) to the appropriate administrative staff to resolve the situation.
- d. A decision will be rendered by the Superintendent or his/her designee within 10 school days after receiving the forwarded grievance form and principal's response.

3. Elmore County Board of Education (ECBOE)

- a. If a grievance is not resolved at level two, the grievant(s) may proceed to level three by presenting the results of the *School Conference Report*, and the original completed grievance form with the Principal's and Superintendent's responses to the President of the Board of Education within 10 school days after the Superintendent's response.
- b. During an executive session of the ECBOE, the grievant(s) will be given the opportunity to present any matter relative to their position.
- c. The decision by the members of the ECBOE is final in the grievance process.

Failure at any step of this procedure to communicate decisions at the levels and in the manner required at the respective level shall permit the grievance to proceed to the next level. Failure at any step of this procedure to appeal a grievance to the next level within specified time limits shall be deemed an acceptance of the decision rendered at that level and this procedure shall terminate for the given grievance.