

## Summit Public Schools Washington (“SPS”) - School Complaint Policy

The Governing Board recognizes that Summit Public Schools (“SPS”) has primary responsibility for ensuring that it complies with the applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs.

SPS shall follow the Complaint Procedures when addressing:

- **Complaints regarding curriculum development and instructional materials.**
- **Complaints that SPS has violated anti-discrimination laws.**

This complaint procedure is designed to assure that the resolution of real or alleged violations are directed toward a just solution that is satisfactory to the complainant, the administration and the board of directors. This grievance procedure will apply to the general conditions of the nondiscrimination policy and curriculum development and instructional materials.

As used in this procedure:

A. “Grievance” means a complaint which has been filed by a complainant relating to alleged violations of any state or federal anti-discrimination laws. “Complaint” means a written, signed charge alleging specific acts, conditions or circumstances, which are in violation of the anti-discrimination laws.

B. The time period for filing a complaint is one year from the date of the occurrence that is the subject matter of the complaint. However, a complaint filing deadline may not be imposed if the complainant was prevented from filing due to: 1) Specific misrepresentations by the district that it had resolved the problem forming the basis of the complaint; or 2) Withholding of information that the district was required to provide under WAC 392-190-065 or WAC 392-190-005. Complaints may be submitted by mail, fax, e-mail or hand-delivery to any district, school or to the district compliance officer responsible for investigating discrimination complaints. Any district employee who receives a complaint that meets these criteria will promptly notify the compliance officer.

C. Respondent means the person alleged to be responsible or who may be responsible for the violation alleged in the complaint.

D. The Board acknowledges and respects every individual’s rights to privacy. Discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and bullying complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects [to the greatest extent possible] the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process. SPS cannot guarantee anonymity of the complainant. This includes keeping the identity of the complainant confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SPS or their designee on a case-by-case basis.

The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure an equitable solution to a justifiable complaint. To this end, specific steps will be taken. The district is prohibited by law from intimidating, threatening, coercing or discriminating against any individual for the purpose of interfering with their right to file a grievance under this policy and procedure and from retaliating against an individual for filing such a grievance.

### **Compliance Officers**

The Governing Board designates the following compliance officer to receive and investigate complaints and ensure SPS's compliance with the law:

#### **Summit Public Schools Network Compliance Officer**

Keith Cantrelle (Conflict Resolution Advisor)

Summit Public Schools

900 Island Drive, Suite 203

Redwood City, CA 94063

[kcantrelle@summitps.org](mailto:kcantrelle@summitps.org)

Phone: (650) 257-9878

Fax: (650) 517-8356

#### **Summit Public Schools Sierra Compliance Officer**

Malia Burns

Executive Director

Summit Public Schools Sierra

1025 S. King St

Seattle, WA 98104

Phone: 206-999-9196

Email: [mburns@summitps.org](mailto:mburns@summitps.org)

#### **Summit Public Schools Olympus Compliance Officer**

Greg Ponikvar

Executive Director

Summit Public Schools Olympus

409 Puyallup

Tacoma, WA 98421

Phone: 253-244-9781

Email: [gponikvar@summitps.org](mailto:gponikvar@summitps.org)

#### **Summit Public Schools Atlas Compliance Officer**

Katheryn Bubalo

Executive Director

Summit Public Schools Atlas

9601 35th Ave SW

Seattle, WA 98126

Phone: 504-220-9397

Email: [kbubalo@summitps.org](mailto:kbubalo@summitps.org)

The CEO shall ensure that employees designated to investigate complaints are knowledgeable about laws and programs for which they are responsible. Such employees may have access to legal counsel as determined by CEO or designee.

## **NOTIFICATIONS**

Complaint Procedures are distributed to every student and family in the Student – Family Handbooks that are sent home every year. Procedures are distributed at parent-teacher meetings, and to new students as part of the enrollment process. Procedures and forms are available at every SPS school site and the SPS Home Office. Complaint procedures are distributed to classified and certificated employees at the beginning of each school year. Complaint procedures are distributed in different languages to students of school where 15% or more students speak a primary language other than English. SPS also

provides an annual written notification of the complaint procedures to advisory committees, private school officials, and other interested parties (i.e., Adult Education).

Copies of the SPS complaint procedures shall be available free of charge.

## **PROCEDURES**

The following procedures shall be used to address all complaints that allege a violation of federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs. The compliance officer shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions. All parties involved in allegations shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when a complaint meeting or hearing is scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

### **A. Informal Process for Resolution**

Anyone with an allegation of discrimination may request an informal meeting with the compliance officer or designated employee to resolve their concerns. Such a meeting will be at the option of the complainant. If unable to resolve the issue at this meeting, the complainant may submit a written complaint to the compliance officer. During the course of the informal process, the district must notify complainant of their right to file a formal complaint.

### **B. Formal Process for Resolution**

#### **Level One: Complaint to District**

The complaint must set forth the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to be in violation. Upon receipt of a complaint, the compliance officer will provide the complainant a copy of this procedure. The compliance officer will investigate the allegations within 30 calendar days. The school district and complainant may agree to resolve the complaint in lieu of an investigation. The officer shall provide the Senior Director of Schools with a full written report of the complaint and the results of the investigation.

The Senior Director of Schools or designee will respond to the complainant with a written decision as expeditiously as possible, but in no event later than 30 calendar days following receipt of the written complaint, unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant or if exceptional circumstances related to the complaint require an extension of the time limit. In the event an extension is needed, the district will notify the complainant in writing of the reason for the extension and the anticipated response date at the time the district responds to the complainant, the district must send a copy of the response to the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

The decision of the Senior Director of Schools or designee will include: 1) a summary of the results of the investigation; 2) whether the district has failed to comply with anti-discrimination laws; 3) if non-compliance is found, corrective measures the district deems necessary to correct it; and 4) notice of the complainant's right to appeal to the school board and the necessary filing information. The Senior Director of School's or designee's response will be provided in a language the complainant can

understand and may require language assistance for complainants with limited English proficiency in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Any corrective measures deemed necessary shall be instituted as expeditiously as possible, but in no event later than 30 calendar days following the Senior Director of Schools' mailing of a written response to the complaining party unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant.

### **Level Two – Appeal to the Board of Directors**

If a complainant disagrees with the Senior Director of School's or designee's written decision, the complainant may appeal the decision to the district board of directors by filing a written notice of appeal with the secretary of the board within ten (10) calendar days following the date upon which the complainant received the response.

The board shall schedule a hearing to commence by the twentieth (20th) calendar day following the filing of the written notice of appeal, unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant and the Senior Director of Schools or for good cause. Both parties shall be allowed to present such witnesses and testimony as the board deems relevant and material. Unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant, the board will render a written decision within thirty (30) calendar days following the filing of the notice of appeal and provide the complainant with a copy of the decision. The decision of the board will be provided in a language the complainant can understand, which may require language assistance for complainants with limited English proficiency in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The decision will include notice of the complainant's right to appeal to the superintendent of Public Instruction and will identify where and to whom the appeal must be filed. The district will send a copy of the appeal decision to the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

### **Level Three - Complaint to the Superintendent of Public Instruction**

If a complainant disagrees with the decision of the board of directors, or if the district fails to comply with this procedure, the complainant may file a complaint with the superintendent of public instruction.

A complaint must be received by the superintendent of Public Instruction on or before the twentieth (20) calendar day following the date upon which the complainant received written notice of the board of directors' decision, unless the superintendent of Public Instruction grants an extension for good cause. Complaints may be submitted by mail, fax, electronic mail, or hand delivery.

A complaint must be in writing and include: 1) A description of the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to violate applicable anti-discrimination laws; 2) The name and contact information, including address, of the complainant; 3) The name and address of the district subject to the complaint; 4) A copy of the district's complaint and appeal decision, if any; and 5) A proposed resolution of the complaint or relief requested. If the allegations regard a specific student, the complaint must also include the name and address of the student, or in the case of a homeless child or youth, contact information.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Office of the superintendent of Public Instruction may initiate an investigation, which may include conducting an independent on-site review. OSPI may also investigate additional issues related to the complaint that were not included in the initial complaint or appeal to the Senior Director of Schools or board. Following the investigation, OSPI will make an independent determination as to whether the district has failed to comply with RCW 28A.642.010 or Chapter 392-190, WAC and will issue a written decision to the complainant and the district that addresses each allegation in the complaint and any other noncompliance issues it has identified. The written decision will include corrective actions deemed necessary to correct noncompliance and documentation the district must provide to demonstrate that corrective action has been completed.

All corrective actions must be completed within the timelines established by OSPI in the written decision unless OSPI grants an extension. If timely compliance is not achieved, OSPI may take action including but not limited to referring the district to appropriate state or federal agencies empowered to order compliance.

A complaint may be resolved at any time when, before the completion of the investigation, the district voluntarily agrees to resolve the complaint. OSPI may provide technical assistance and dispute resolution methods to resolve a complaint.

#### **Level Four - Administrative Hearing**

A complainant or school district that desires to appeal the written decision of the Office of the superintendent of Public Instruction may file a written notice of appeal with OSPI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date of receipt of that office's written decision. OSPI will conduct a formal administrative hearing in conformance with the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 34.05, RCW.

#### **C. Mediation**

At any time during the discrimination complaint procedure set forth in WAC 392-190-065 through 392-190-075, a district may, at its own expense, offer mediation. The complainant and the district may agree to extend the discrimination complaint process deadlines in order to pursue mediation.

The purpose of mediation is to provide both the complainant and the district an opportunity to resolve disputes and reach a mutually acceptable agreement through the use of an impartial mediator. Mediation must be voluntary and requires the mutual agreement of both parties. It may be terminated by either party at any time during the mediation process. It may not be sued to deny or delay a complainant's right to utilize the complaint procedures.

Mediation must be conducted by a qualified and impartial mediator who may not:

- 1) Be an employee of any school district, public charter school, or other public or private agency that is providing education related services to a student who is the subject of the complaint being mediated; or
- 2) Have a personal or professional conflict of interest. A mediator is not considered an employee of the district or charter school or other public or private agency solely because he or she serves as a mediator.

If the parties reach agreement through mediation, they may execute a legally binding agreement that sets forth the resolution and states that all discussions that occurred during the course of mediation will remain confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent complaint, due process hearing or civil proceeding. The agreement must be signed by the complainant and a district representative who has authority to bind the district.

**D. Preservation of Records**

The files containing copies of all correspondence relative to each complaint communicated to the district and the disposition, including any corrective measures instituted by the district, will be retained in the office of the compliance officer for a period of six years.

**SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS – UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FORM**

**UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FORM**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name/MI: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/Apt. #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Office of Alleged Violation: \_\_\_\_\_

**For allegation(s) of noncompliance, please check the program or activity referred to in your complaint, if applicable:**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education            | <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Categorical Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition Services            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career/Technical Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant and Indian Education      | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil Fees                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Control Funding Formula |

**For allegation(s) of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying, please check the basis of the unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying described in your complaint, if applicable:**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender / Gender Expression / Gender Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex (Actual or Perceived)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic Information                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation (Actual or Perceived)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color                           | <input type="checkbox"/> National Origin                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability (Mental or Physical) | <input type="checkbox"/> Race or Ethnicity                            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Group Identification     | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion                                     |  |

1. Please give facts about the complaint. Provide details such as the names of those involved, dates, whether witnesses were present, etc., that may be helpful to the complaint investigator.

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2. Have you discussed your complaint or brought your complaint to any Charter School personnel? If you have, to whom did you take the complaint, and what was the result?

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3. Please provide copies of any written documents that may be relevant or supportive of your complaint.

I have attached supporting documents.  Yes  No

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail complaint and any relevant documents to:  
Keith Cantrelle | Conflict Resolution Advisor  
Summit Public Schools  
900 Island Drive, Suite 203  
Redwood City, CA 94063  
[kcantrelle@summitps.org](mailto:kcantrelle@summitps.org)  
Phone: (650) 257 - 9878 Fax: (650) 517 - 8356

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**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Informal Complaint Date of Informal Resolution \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Formal Complaint Date of Formal Resolution \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Resolved