

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

The Board believes that complaints are best heard and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that staff members should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the School Board.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Board as a whole or to an individual Board member, the individual or group making the complaint will be provided information on how to obtain a copy of the policy and procedures for the resolution of the complaint.

The proper channeling of complaints is:

1. Teacher/classified employee
2. Athletic Director or Director of Activities (as applicable)
3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. School Board

If a complaint that was presented to the School Board and referred back through the proper channels is resolved before it comes back to the School Board, a written report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the School Board and then placed in the official school files.

Exceptions to this policy may be made only when the complaint concerns School Board actions or operations.

Complaint Procedure:

Step 1:

The individual/group will meet with the appropriate staff member in an attempt to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the individual/group may move to Step 2 by putting the complaint in writing and submitting it to the Principal. The Principal will give a copy of the complaint to the staff member. The staff member must respond in writing.

Step 2:

The Principal will meet with the individual/group and the staff member, individually or jointly, in an attempt to resolve the problem. If a resolution agreeable to both parties is reached, a report and implementation procedure will be made in writing by the Principal and delivered to the Superintendent and the School Board. If no agreement is reached, the Principal will render a decision in writing within 10 working school days. A copy of the decision will be given to the individual/group, the staff member, and the Superintendent. Within 20 working school days, either party may go to Step 3.

Step 3:

The written complaint, with the Principal's action, is given to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will meet with the individual/group, the staff member, and the Principal, individually or jointly. If resolution is reached, the Superintendent will write a report and provide a copy to the individual/group, the staff member, the Principal, and the School Board. If no agreement is reached, the Superintendent will render a decision in writing within 10 working school days and deliver it to the individual/group, the staff member, the Principal, and the School Board. Within 20 working school days, either party may go to Step 4 by notifying the Superintendent.

Step 4:

The School Board will consider the complaint while meeting in executive session. The School Board will make every effort to conduct the meeting in a fair and just manner. Generally, all parties involved will be asked to attend such a meeting for the purposes of presenting additional facts, making further explanations, and clarifying the issues. The board may request a disinterested third part to act as a moderator.

The Superintendent will provide the Board with written copies of the complaint, the staff member's response, the Principal's decision, and the Superintendent's decision. At the hearing, the individual/group making the complaint will explain the complaint; the Superintendent will explain the administration's response.

The School Board will render its decision, which will be implemented by the Superintendent. The individual/group making the complaint or the staff member may appeal this decision within 90 days to the Circuit Court as per SDCL 13-46.

The Board, under the provisions of law, will prosecute any parent, guardian, or other person who insults, or abuses any teacher or other employee on school property or in the presence of students. School employees who are sued as a consequence of performing their assigned duties will be provided full legal services by the school district.