

DODGELAND SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board Policy Manual

872 - Rule

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS
ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND OFFICIALS

In the event complaints are made by parents/guardians or other citizens (subsequently referred to as citizen) about school personnel or school officials, the following procedures shall be used:

INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

When a citizen has a complaint concerning school personnel or a school official, the citizen shall be directed and encouraged to resolve the matter informally by bringing the complaint to the attention of the District employee or school official most directly associated with the concern. The citizen or employee may request the employee's immediate supervisor to sit in on this meeting.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

Complaints About School Employees

Step 1: If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the employee's immediate supervisor will provide the complainant with a complaint form that must be submitted to the immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall investigate the written and signed complaint and prepare a written report within 10 days of receiving the complaint.

Step 2: If the complaint is not resolved with Step 1, the written complaint shall be forwarded to the next level of administration in the District. At each level, further investigation shall occur as needed and a written response shall be prepared within 10 days of receiving the complaint.

Step 3: If the complaint is not resolved at Step 2, the complaint shall go to the District Administrator. A conference will be arranged among the parties involved within 10 days of receiving the complaint. A written response shall be prepared within 10 days following the conference.

Step 4: If the complaint is not resolved at Step 3, to the satisfaction of all parties, the complaint shall be taken to the School Board. The Board shall hold a hearing on the matter. The hearing will be subject to state law requirements pertaining to closed sessions. The Board shall prepare a written decision within 30 days of the hearing. This shall be the final appeal with the decision of the Board being final.

Complaints About Elected School Officials (Board Members)

Step 1: If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the written complaint form must be submitted to the Board President, or, if the complaint involves the Board President, to the Board Vice President. The Board shall be notified of the complaint and members shall be provided copies of the written complaint.

The complaint shall be forwarded to the District's legal counsel for review and fact-finding as needed. Legal counsel will make a recommendation to the Board whether the complaint should be dismissed or if it should be advanced to the full Board for a determination as to whether the conduct occurred, and if so, whether the conduct violated Board policy. The Board member who is the subject of the complaint may be present at the closed session when legal counsel presents the legal review and recommendation, but may not participate in the discussion or vote on whether to advance the complaint to the full Board. If dismissed, the complainant shall be notified in writing as to the dismissal and the reasons for such dismissal.

Step 2: If the decision is to advance the complaint to the Board at a special or regular meeting, the complainant and the Board member who is the subject of the complaint shall be provided an opportunity to present facts or other information relevant to the complaint. The meeting shall be conducted in closed session if open meeting legal requirements are met. The Board member who is the subject of the complaint may not participate in the Board's discussion of the complaint or vote on Board action related to the complaint. Any parties not present when the Board takes action on the complaint will be notified in writing of the Board's decision.

Nothing in this procedure or related policy is intended to supersede time lines or procedures specified in other District policies or administrative rules, or applicable legally mandated time lines or processes including, but not limited to, complaints related to: employee discrimination and harassment, student discrimination and harassment, special education, early admission decisions, reconsideration of instructional materials, and student promotion decisions.

Approved: February 17, 1997
Revised (WASB): December 16, 2013