

Resolution of Staff Complaints

The Tonasket School District recognizes that a healthy and prosperous school district is a result of open, honest, and direct communication about decisions, concerns, and problem solving.

Complaints are best solved at the lowest level possible, so before filing a formal complaint, it is expected that staff and patrons have made attempts to resolve the issue in the following manner.

Dealing with Complaints Directly with People Involved

We resolve complaints directly with the individual responsible for the concerns in a confidential manner, approaching the discussion with an open mind and with an attitude that seeks to understand.

Prior to the following procedures, individuals should make every effort to solve issues by communicating with parties involved one on one. The following steps should be utilized only if an amicable resolution is not possible.

Unresolved complaints are to be directed through the chain of command until the staff/patron has found satisfaction.

1. The direct supervisor (for staff members) or department supervisor/principal (for patrons) listens to the complaint gathering information. If the supervisor/program director/principal deems the complaint has:
 - a. Risen from a misunderstanding or miscommunication; or
 - b. The behavior being complained about is not serious and does not appear to be discrimination or harassment, as defined by the organization's policy;

The direct supervisor or department supervisor/principal will:

- a. Encourage the complainant to talk directly and privately to the person the complaint is with to get resolved.
- b. If they have already met and have not come to a resolution, facilitate a meeting between the two individuals.

If the issue can't be resolved, the supervisor/department supervisor/principal will determine if intervention is needed in as far as a directive, evaluation, etc. If not, will seek options for mediation.

The chain of command is as follows:

- Athletics - head coach; athletic director; principal; superintendent, school board.
- Transportation - student's bus driver; transportation supervisor; superintendent.
- Student Concerns - student's classroom teacher; principal/MTSS Director; superintendent.
- School Facilities - maintenance supervisor; superintendent.

Complaints involving physical abuse, sexual issues, or other extremely serious matters should be reported immediately to the principal/MTSS Director or superintendent.

The following procedure has been established for resolving a complaint filed by a member of the staff, only after the above, documented meetings have produced unsuccessful resolution:

Step One

The staff member will present the complaint in writing to his/her immediate supervisor within 15 work days of the action or incident. An email, typed or handwritten statements, are the only acceptable forms of submission. Text messages or any other similar means are unacceptable.

The written statement of the complaint will contain:

- A. The facts upon which the complaint is based as the staff member who is filing the complaint sees them;
- B. A reference to the policies of the district which have allegedly been violated; and
- C. The remedies sought.

The staff member will discuss this complaint with his/her immediate supervisor. If the complaint is against an administrator or another staff member, such individual will be present at the meeting to present the facts as he/she sees them. A sincere effort will be made to resolve the complaint at this level. If the aggrieved person does not appeal the complaint to the superintendent within 10 work days of the aggrieved person's meeting with his/her immediate supervisor, the complaint will be waived.

Step Two

The superintendent will, within 10 work days of the receipt of the complainant's appeal, meet with that staff member to hear his/her claim. If the complaint is against an administrator or another staff member, such individual will be present at the hearing to present the facts as he/she sees them.

The superintendent will render a decision regarding the appeal within 10 work days of the appeal hearing. If the complainant does not appeal the superintendent's decision to the board through the superintendent within 10 work days, the complaint will be waived.

Step Three

If the complainant appeals his/her complaint to the board as provided, the board will hold a hearing within 10 work days to hear the appeal of the superintendent's decision. At the appeal before the board, the complainant may be accompanied by counsel if the complainant wishes. If administrators or other staff are involved, they will be present at the hearing to present the facts as they see them. The board will, within 15 work days of the complaint hearing, present its decision with respect to the complaint. The board's decision as representatives of the electorate of the district will be considered final.

Tonasket School District

Date: 4-26-13

Revised: 2.28.22