

DESCRIPTOR TERM: <b>RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS</b>	DESCRIPTOR CODE: <b>1742</b>	BOARD APPROVED: <b>MARCH 26, 2010</b>

#### STATUTORY PROVISIONS

**Legal Reference: G.S. 115C-36, -47**

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#### STATE BOARD POLICY

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#### LOCAL BOARD POLICY

### OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

The board, as well as school staff, is committed to providing an effective means for parents and members of the community to voice concerns and complaints and strives to resolve issues whenever possible. To this end, the board has established the following processes:

- informal resolutions of specific concerns (see General Process below);
- public hearings and public comments at board meetings on subjects of concern to parents and the community (Public Participation at Board Meetings)
- specific processes for addressing disciplinary consequences;
- processes provided by law for special education students; and
- grievance procedure for addressing concerns regarding specific decisions, especially where there are concerns that board policy or law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, including discrimination claims on the basis of sex or disability.

### GENERAL PROCESS

Complaints that are not specifically included in other policies should be addressed in the following manner:

- The complaint should be received, and addressed at the level closest to the origin of the complaint. For example, a complaint regarding a classroom should be heard first by the teacher. A complaint regarding the school should be addressed first by the principal.

## Page 2 – Responding to Complaints

- Any board member or staff member receiving a complaint should make sure that the complaint has been appropriately referred to the person closest in the origin of the complaint and, if not, assist the complainant by identifying appropriate personnel.
- Once appropriately referred, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, the complainant should be informed of the options for further review of the complaint.
- A complaint or series of complaints that raise significant issues about the educational program or the operation of the schools is an opportunity to further examine the success of the school district in meeting its goals and objectives. When feasible, a group representing various perspectives and interests should discuss the issue and make recommendations to appropriate personnel or to the superintendent, prior to the board.
- In general, complaints are to progress, as necessary, from the level closest to the complaint, to the principal, to a director, the superintendent or an assistant superintendent and then to the board.

The superintendent is responsible for communicating the requirements and the intent of this policy.

While all complaints should be heard, some may not be resolved. Nevertheless, the intent should be to listen carefully and fully understand the concern.

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