



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

General Grievance Procedure (Students and/or Caregivers) (2023)

Introduction

HCCPS is a community based on consensus. In that spirit we embrace the importance of open dialogue and communication among the community. Therefore, we strongly support dialogue as the first, and necessary step to our school grievance procedure. If a face-to-face dialogue does not resolve the conflict, then the following process shall be used. HCCPS staff members may not use this process to resolve their grievances.

This grievance procedure does not apply to any civil rights complaints. Complaints regarding civil rights will be handled in accordance with the applicable board of trustees policies and the specific applicable civil rights procedure(s).

A. Definition

A “grievance” is a claim based upon an event or condition which affects the welfare and/or education of one or more student(s). A “grievant” is defined as a student and/or parent or guardian submitting the grievance.

B. Time Limits

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to the problems which may from time to time arise affecting the welfare or education of students. Both parties agree that these proceedings will be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the procedure. Nothing in this grievance procedure will preclude the parties from resolving issues informally, provided said informal resolution does not violate the policies of the Board of Trustees.

Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered as maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process.

A “grievance” shall be deemed to have been waived and shall not be further processed under this grievance process if it has not been presented or pursued within those time limits herein set forth. The time limits specified may be extended by a mutual agreement in writing.

D. Levels/Procedure



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Level One

If a concern cannot be resolved with face-to-face dialogue, a student, parent and/or guardian with a grievance will present it, in writing, to a Director within fifteen (15) school days of the time the student, parent and/or guardian knew or should have known of the act or condition on which the grievance is based. The student, parent and/or guardian will clearly state they are filing a grievance per the Hilltown Grievance Procedure.

Within ten (10) school days of receipt of the grievance, the Director will meet with the grievant. Within five (5) school days of the meeting, the Director will render a written response.

If the grievance directly involves a Director, the student, parent and/or guardian can present the grievance, in writing, to the Board of Trustees' President and Vice President. The same time limits as above will apply.

Level Two

If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant within ten (10) school days of the meeting at Level One, or if no response has been made within said time period, the grievance may be presented in writing to the Board of Trustees by sending the grievance to the President and Vice President of the Board of Trustees within ten (10) school days of the Level One response, or the response due date, whichever is earlier.

The Board of Trustees will render its response, in writing, within ten (10) school days following the next meeting of the Board of Trustees at which the grievance can be placed on the agenda subject to Open Meeting requirements. The Board of Trustees' decision is final and binding and is not subject to arbitration.

Other alternate avenues of reporting grievances include:

Problem Resolution System Office (PRS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
<https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/intake/default.html>

DESE Charter School Office <https://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/complaints.html> Note: if the complaint is about special education or student safety, the complaint should not be filed with the Charter School Office. It should go directly to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (see above).