



LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Lincoln, Massachusetts

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The School Committee believes that complaints should be handled and resolved at the building and/or Central Office level. School staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issue and resolve the complaint prior to School Committee involvement. The proper sequence for reporting and resolving complaints is through:

~~Persons who have specific complaints about their child's education or school activities should discuss the matter with the teacher involved. If the problem is not resolved, the matter should then be taken to~~

- ~~1. the teacher~~
- ~~2. the Principal or School Building Administrator~~
- ~~3. and finally to the Superintendent.~~
4. the School Committee (only if the matter has first been reviewed at all levels noted above).

~~Generally, the School Committee will not consider the matter until review has been held on all three levels.~~

In addition, the School Committee will only consider the matter if after review of the process carried out, it is determined that the administration failed to follow through adequately or did not follow a district policy or state or federal regulation or law. If the School Committee considers the matter, the person in question will be notified that the School Committee will be hearing a complaint.

~~Letters from parents complimenting or criticizing a teacher will be shown to the teacher. Letters placed in a teacher's file must be given to the teacher to sign. A refusal to sign will be noted on the letter.~~ Written complaints may be considered in the evaluation process of school personnel and will be handled as supporting evidence as outlined in the evaluation guidelines. Written complaints will be shown to school personnel at the evaluator's discretion.

Source: MASC 2016: KE, Public Complaints

Legal Refs: M.G.L. 76:5; 603 CMR 26.00

Refs: JICFB, Bullying Prevention
ACA, Harassment and Harassment Reporting and Investigation Procedures

~~Approved at Administrator's Meeting of May 28, 1985~~

~~Revised at Administrator's Meeting of December 3, 1981~~

~~Approved-Adopted at School Committee Meeting of December 7, 1981~~

~~Reaffirmed at School Committee Meeting of May 6, 1985~~

~~Revised at School Committee Meeting of _____~~



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3. the Superintendent
4. the School Committee (only if the matter has first been reviewed at all levels noted above).

In addition, the School Committee will only consider the matter if after review of the process carried out, it is determined that the administration failed to follow through adequately or did not follow a district policy or state or federal regulation or law. If the School Committee considers the matter, the person in question will be notified that the School Committee will be hearing a complaint.

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Below are policies from some local school districts. As you can see, most follow the MASC policy template. Most schools have policy KE and some have the additional policy KEB. In Lincoln we have only had KEB regarding complaints about school personnel. Generally, the policies are very similar – I included these as references to see if there are any portions of these examples you would suggest we incorporate into our existing policy. - Tara

MASC 2016: KE - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS (Wellesley, Concord, A/B, Lexington, Bedford)

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

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

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:5](#)

603 CMR [26.00](#)

Weston: KE: PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Complaints and grievances shall be handled and resolved, whenever possible, as close to their origin as possible.

Although no member of the community shall be denied the right to petition the School Committee for redress of a grievance, the complaints shall be referred back through the proper administrative channels for resolution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions are complaints that concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee advises the public that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

1. Teacher
2. Principal
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

Any complaint about school personnel will be investigated by the administration before consideration by the Committee.

Wellesley, Concord, Lexington, Bedford Schools (MASC): KEB - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit a signed complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Committee as a whole or to a Committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for study and possible solution.

An employee who is the object of a complaint shall be informed promptly and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as he/she sees them in accordance with the provisions of collective bargaining agreements when applicable.

If it appears necessary, the administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Committee for a formal hearing and decision. Statutory restrictions on executive sessions will be observed.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:5](#)

603 CMR [26.00](#) (Access to Equal Educational Opportunity)

CROSS REF.: [BEC](#), Executive Sessions

Concord, Lexington (MASC) Procedure: KEB-R - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The following procedures are established to ensure that a citizen's complaint is given respectful attention and that the integrity of the educational program is upheld. "Complaint" in this regulation will be restricted in meaning to that criticism of particular school employees by a citizen of the School District which includes or implies a demand for action by school authorities. Other comments and suggestions will be referred informally to affected personnel.

1. If a complaint comes first to the person against whom it is directed, he/she will listen courteously and may try to resolve the difficulty by explaining the background and educational purpose involved. If the complaint remains unsatisfied, the employee will refer him/her to the building Principal or other immediate supervisor to have his/her views considered further. Whether the complaint terminates with the individual staff member involved or seems likely to go further, the staff member will immediately inform his/her supervisor of the complaint.

2. If a complaint comes first to the Principal or other supervisor of the person criticized, he/she should listen courteously or acknowledge a letter promptly and politely, but should make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats. If the complaint involves a particular employee, the supervisor should suggest a conference between the complainant and the person criticized and should inform that person immediately of the complaint.

If the complainant has already met with the person criticized and remains unsatisfied, the supervisor should invite the complainant to file his complaint in writing and offer to send him the appropriate form regarding a school employee's behavior, character or qualifications.

3. If a complaint comes first to any other school employee, that employee will refer the complainant to the person criticized or his immediate supervisor and immediately inform both.

4. No further action on the complaint should be taken unless the complainant submits the complaint in writing.

5. When a written complaint form is received, the Principal or other supervisor will schedule a conference with himself, the complainant, the person criticized, and if advisable, the department chairman or other personnel that either the supervisor or the person criticized feels could contribute resolution of the problem.

6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the conference above, he/she should then be referred to the Superintendent, who may handle the complaint personally or refer it to other personnel, as he/she may see fit.

7. Should dissatisfaction remain after the above steps have been taken, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting. The decision of the Committee will be communicated in writing to all interested persons. LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26.09](#) and [26.10](#)



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