



Voicing A Concern: A Guide For Parents/Guardians

Conflict, misunderstandings, and hurt feelings are experiences we all encounter. We understand parents' frustration when their children face challenges at school and the difficulty of effectively addressing these issues. The following step-by-step guide is designed to help parents, students, and school staff work together to resolve problems, issues, and concerns.

Step 1: Address the Concern with the Person Closest to the Issue

The quickest and most effective way to resolve a concern is to begin with the person most directly involved. Whether the situation occurs in the classroom, on the bus, or in the practice field, start by discussing it with the relevant teacher, bus driver, coach, or staff member. This approach often leads to a resolution.

If direct communication isn't possible or doesn't provide a satisfactory solution, proceed to the next step.

Step 2: Escalate to the Next Level

If the issue remains unresolved, share your concern with the building principal, activities director, or another appropriate school administrator/director. When you approach them, provide details about the steps you've already taken and explain why you might feel uncomfortable addressing the issue directly with the person closest to the problem. This transparency helps school leaders better understand and address your concerns.

Step 3: Contact the Superintendent of Schools

When efforts with staff and building administrators do not lead to a satisfactory resolution, the superintendent is the next step. Be aware that the superintendent's schedule may include commitments outside the district, so plan to schedule a meeting.

Step 4: Reach Out to School Board Members

School board members represent the interests of all parents and community members. While they do not manage the school's day-to-day operations, they can take specific actions if concerns remain unresolved after following the steps above.

You may contact a school board member if:

- You've exhausted other means to address the problem.
- You believe a policy is being enforced with unintended consequences.
- You feel a policy is not being enforced appropriately.

School board members can:

- Informally discuss the issue with the superintendent for follow-up.
- Request a review of district policies related to the situation.
- Propose new policies for the board's consideration.

Important Note: Individual school board members do not have the authority to act independently. Decisions require approval by a majority of the board during public meetings.

Step 5: Grievances

If you have a complaint about an employee, you may give information to the employee's immediate supervisor. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, you may appeal in writing according to the following order:

1. Other supervisors or administrators responsible.
2. The superintendent.
3. The board of directors.

The Board of Directors shall strongly encourage that this chain of appeal be followed.

Tips for Effective Communication

1. Build Relationships with School Staff

Connect regularly with your child's teachers, bus drivers, and coaches. Knowing who they are and how to contact them can make communication easier when concerns arise.

2. Communicate Concerns Promptly

Share concerns early and openly. Many issues stem from oversights or misunderstandings that can be resolved quickly when brought to the appropriate person's attention.

3. Provide Context for Your Concern

When scheduling an appointment to discuss an issue, let the person know the general nature of your concern. This allows them to gather relevant information and prepare for a more productive conversation. If a personal meeting isn't possible, start by briefly explaining the problem in a phone call and arrange a follow-up time for a deeper discussion.

4. Foster a Unified Team Between Home and School

While it's natural to feel frustration, be mindful of how sharing concerns with your child can affect their perception of school. A strong partnership between parents and teachers creates the most supportive educational experience. Avoid letting temporary frustrations undermine this relationship.

By following these steps and suggestions, we can create a supportive, collaborative environment where challenges are addressed constructively, ensuring the best possible outcomes for all students.

