

Policy Name	Conflict Resolution & Grievance Policy
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Applicable Statute	

I. Definition

A grievance is generally defined as a claim by an employee that they are adversely affected by the misinterpretation or misapplication of a written school policy. This policy is not meant to govern contractual grievances under the union contract or Title IX grievances as articulated in Title IX Grievance Procedure.

A grievance is defined to be a question, problem, or a disagreement which arises concerning:

- 1) The interpretation or application of any provision of Title IX, Section 504, Chapter 622, or
- 2) Special Education
- 3) Student and Family concerns regarding school policy
- 4) Board Policy
- 5) Employee concerns regarding school policy
- 6) Administrative concerns regarding implementing school policy

The following interpersonal conflicts are not applicable for the grievance policy, and should be addressed using a conflict resolution process (see section IV of this policy):

- 1) Student-student conflict
- 2) Student-teacher conflicts
- 3) Employee conflicts

II. Whistleblower protection: Great River School whistleblower policy 320.01. Great River School shall not discharge, discipline, threaten, otherwise discriminate against, or penalize an employee, student, family, or community member. All community members protected by the whistleblower law in Minnesota (Minn. Stat. § 181.932).

III. Purpose

Great River School has established the following procedures for resolving conflicts and concerns at Great River School. The goal is to resolve as many issues as possible prior to the formal grievance stage.

IV. Informal Procedure - Conflict Resolution (this should occur prior to a formal grievance being made)

If a conflict arises between employees, between students, between employees and students, or between parents and school, the parties should make every effort to resolve their differences.

If this is not an option, people with a grievance can seek support from school personnel to help them find a resolution. The table below lists informal resources to contact if assistance is needed in resolving a conflict (the most appropriate contact is listed first, followed by the next appropriate contact).

Informal Process

- a. Informal conversation between conflicting parties
- b. Informally mediated conversation between conflicting parties (with people below)
- c. Mediated conversation (with a hired mediator)

Conflict is with:	Who can help support an informal conversation or assist in finding a resolution?
A Student	- Dean of Students/Director of Student Services - Program Director

	- Head of School
A Colleague	- Your Supervisor - Human Resources Manager - Director of Administration - Head of School
Caregivers	- Program Director - Head of School
Your Supervisor or other Member of the Leadership Team	- Head of School - Human Resources Manager
The Head of School	- Human Resources Manager

The Great River School Board should only be contacted after the informal procedure has run its course. The parties should meet at least twice to resolve the issue before going to the Board.

Any issue that is an immediate threat to student or staff safety should be reported directly to the Head of School or to the legal authorities if necessary.

V. Formal Grievance Procedure

Parties not satisfied with the result of informal efforts to resolve their situation or parties who wish to appeal an administrative decision must use the following procedure:

1. Present a formal grievance in writing to a Grievance Representative):
 - a. If the grievance is with any GRS employee, it should be presented to the Head of School
 - b. If the grievance is with the Head of School, it should be presented to the Board Chair
 - c. If the grievance is with the Board Chair, it should be presented to the other members of the Board Executive Committee
 - d. If the grievance is with the Board Executive Committee, it should be presented to the full Board.
2. Within ten (10) working days after receipt of the formal written grievance to the Grievance Representative as identified above in #1, the Grievance Representative along with a representative from the Board will then investigate, or arrange for an external investigation of, the grievance and the underlying facts. Within 10 working days following receipt of the grievance, the Grievance Representative will meet with the person filing the grievance to discuss the complaint. The Grievant may bring in a mutually agreed upon neutral party to witness the discussion. The Grievance Representative and the Board representative will then provide a written response to the grievant, respondent, and to the Executive Committee within 10 working days following the date of the meeting.
3. In the event the grievance is not resolved, the grievant may request a hearing before the Board of Directors. The Board shall review the complaint at the next scheduled Board meeting after receipt of the request. The Board's decision shall be final and shall be made within ten (10) working days of the hearing.
4. Any person who disagrees with the outcome of the School and School Board decision may seek outside arbitration. The grievant bears the burden of proof as to the validity of the grievance. Fees incurred may be the responsibility of the grievant.

VI. Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse, which may include filing charges with the agencies listed below or initiating action in state or federal court.

Claims of discrimination may also be pursued through the following agencies where appropriate:

Novation Education Opportunities (NEO)
School Authorizer
3432 Denmark Ave, Ste 130
Eagan, MN 55123
Tel: 612-889-2103
Email : executive.director.neo@gmail.com

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights, Region V
500 W. Madison Street – Suite 1475
Chicago, IL 60661
Tel: 312-730-1560
TDD: 312-730-1609

MN Department of Human Rights
190 E 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
800.657.3704
651.296.5663
TDD 651.296.1283

For complaints of employment discrimination:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
330 S. 2nd Avenue Suite 430
Minneapolis, MN 55401
800.669.4000
612.335.4040
TDD 612.335.4045

This is general information and is not to be a substitute for legal advice. Changes in the law, including timelines for filing a complaint, may affect your rights.

VII. Notification of Grievance Procedure

Students and families will be notified annually of this Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policy annually through the Family and Student Handbook.