

Parent/Student Grievance Policy and Procedures – Rev 4

The Board seeks to provide students, parents, and guardians an opportunity to address concerns in a timely and orderly fashion. The purpose of this policy is to set out procedures for addressing concerns or disputes so as to reach resolution and ensure that all parties' rights are protected. Students, parents, and guardians should attempt to discuss concerns informally with the persons involved before invoking the grievance procedure, except in cases concerning allegations of harassment. If the student, parent, or guardian feels that their issue is still a concern after speaking with the persons involved and that the issue has risen to the level of a grievance, then the student, parent, or guardian may utilize the grievance procedures as described below. The goal of filing a formal grievance is to use the process to reach an equitable solution.

1. **Definition.** A grievance is a formal written complaint by a student, parent, or guardian, that a specific action has violated a School policy, Board policy, law, or regulation. Complaints that do not raise an alleged violation of a School policy, Board policy, law, or regulation, do not constitute a grievance and are not subject to these procedures. This policy does not apply in the case of long-term suspension or expulsion where the process set forth in N.C. Gen. Stat. §115C-390.1 *et seq* shall apply. In addition, a grievance does not include a complaint of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation which shall be handled pursuant to other applicable Board policies and consistent with state and federal laws.
2. **Time Limits.** A grievance will only be heard if it is submitted within thirty (30) calendar days after the act that is being reported. This 30-day limitation may be extended at the discretion of the Principal.
3. **Prior Attempt at Resolution.** Disputes between students, parents, and classroom teachers may only be made after a meeting with the parent or guardian, teacher, and administration regarding the dispute has occurred, except in cases concerning allegations of harassment.
4. **Grievance Process.**

Step 1. The student, parent, or guardian must submit the grievance in writing stating the School policy, Board policy, law, or regulation that was violated including details of the action and the place, date, and time of the violation. The Complainant should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process. The grievance should be submitted to the Principal. If the Principal is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should be submitted to the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors.

Step 2. The Principal will hold a meeting with the student, parent, and/or guardian within five (5) business days of receiving the grievance. Only the parent, guardian, or someone acting in loco parentis shall be permitted to join or represent the student in the meeting with the Principal. The Principal shall provide a written response to the grievance within five (5) business days after the meeting. If the student, parent, or guardian is satisfied with the Principal's decision, the grievance is considered resolved. The student, parent, or guardian shall notify the Principal in writing that the grievance has been resolved.

Step 3. If the student, parent, or guardian is not satisfied with the decision of the Principal, they may submit an appeal to the Board of Directors. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Board Chair within five (5) business days of the response from the Principal.

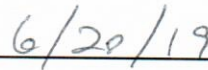
Step 4 Where the grievance is submitted directly to the Board as set forth above or after receiving an appeal, the Board shall consider the matter at its next regularly scheduled meeting, provided such meeting is more than seven (7) days after the submission of the grievance/appeal by the student, parent, or guardian. The Board will consider the grievance/appeal at a meeting in accordance with its Bylaws and the North Carolina Open Meetings Law. Prior to the meeting, at the Board's sole discretion, the Board may request that an investigation be conducted, or additional information gathered regarding the grievance. The student, parent, and/or guardian may attend the Board meeting. The Board will review the written documentation including the decision of the Principal and will issue a final decision within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the grievance or appeal. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final.

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Approved by the River Mill Academy Board of Directors



Chairperson



Date