

PARENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

Except as described below, any individual or group may bring a complaint to the Board. A complaint should include a detailed written statement of the nature of the complaint including the names of the individuals involved and the time, date, and place the incidents and/or actions at issue occurred; an allegation referring to the specific term of the charter or provision of law that the school has violated, what response, if any, was received from the school thus far, what relief the complainant is seeking, and the name, address, and phone number of the complainant.

If a complaint is made regarding a staff member at NYCACS, it will first be the responsibility of the Executive Director to address the complaint to the satisfaction of the Board and the complainant. The Board will serve as the appeals body for any complaints not satisfactorily resolved or that involve the Executive Director directly in the complaint. Complaints must be submitted to the Board at least one week prior to the next Board meeting. Complaints submitted less than one week before the next Board meeting will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the Board responding at or prior to its next regular public meeting. The Board of Trustees will act on the complaint and provide a final response to the complaint within thirty (30) days of receiving the formal written complaint or by the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board unless extenuating circumstances outlined in the complaint require an expedited review. The Board shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required.

The complaint process is guided by Education Law Section 2855(4)(2)(d). An individual or group (a complainant) may bring a complaint alleging a violation of the school's charter, the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (Charter Schools Act), or other applicable law relating to the management or operation of the charter school to the school's Board.

Consistent with Section 2855(4) of the Charter Schools Act, if the complainant determines that the Board has not adequately addressed the complaint, the complainant has the right to present the complaint to the school's authorizing entity, which will review the complaint and investigate as appropriate. If after bringing the complaint to the authorizing entity, the complainant determines the authorizing entity has not adequately addressed the complaint, the complainant may present the complaint to the State Board of Regents, which will review the complaint and investigate as appropriate. The determination of the Board of Regents shall be final. Contact information for the Board of Regents is available at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/contact/>

PERSONNEL COMPLAINT POLICY

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

The School requires its directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics while performing their job duties and responsibilities.

Everyone must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their job responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

This policy is not a vehicle to report violations of the School's human resources policies, problems with co-workers or managers, or issues related to alleged employment, sexual, or other discrimination or harassment. These complaints should be reported following the procedure set forth in the policy corresponding to the type of complaint.

Issues that should be reported under this policy include: suspected fraud, theft, embezzlement, accounting or auditing irregularities, bribery, kickbacks, misuse of the School's assets, or suspected regulatory, compliance, or ethics-related issues, concerns, or violations.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), employees may complain to OSHA if they believe that they've experienced discrimination or retaliation for exercising rights protected by OSHA, such as complaining to the employer's union, OSHA, or any other government agency about workplace safety or health hazards; or for participating in OSHA inspection conferences, hearings, or other OSHA-related activities. Under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), employees may file complaints with OSHA if they believe they have experienced discrimination or retaliation for reporting alleged violations of environmental laws relating to asbestos in elementary and secondary school systems.

Reporting Responsibility

All directors, officers and employees must report in good faith violations or suspected violations of the School's ethical standards in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

Reporting Violations

Questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints regarding the ethical and legal standards noted above should be addressed directly to the School's Executive Director.

Non-Retaliation

If any employee reports a violation in good faith, they shall not suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequences because of their report. If another employee retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith, they may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. This policy is here to encourage employees to raise serious concerns within the School before seeking outside resolution. This policy is not an employment contract and does not modify employees' employment relationship with the School, nor does it change the fact that employees are at-will. Where legal provisions exist elsewhere and/or School policy governs the disclosure of information and other obligations, and/or retaliation relative to such disclosure, such laws and/or School policies shall govern.

INVESTIGATIONS

The Board of Trustees may delegate the investigation of a reported violation to one or

more School employees or to any other individual, including those who are not employed by the School. The Board will not delegate this responsibility to the employee or anyone else who is the subject of a reported violation. They also will not delegate the responsibility in a way that compromises the identity of an employee who anonymously reported a violation or the reasonable confidentiality of the complaint or resulting investigation. The Board of Trustees will determine the scope, manner and parameters of any investigation of reported violations and the School and its employees will need to cooperate as necessary in regards to any kind of investigation.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone reporting a violation must do so in good faith and have reasonable grounds to support their accusation. Any unsubstantiated allegations or those made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality

When an employee reports a violation, they can request that it be handled confidentially, including that the School takes the necessary steps to ensure that their identity remains anonymous. The School takes this policy seriously and encourages employees reporting violations to identify themselves, as this will facilitate any resulting investigation. Employees may, however, report violations anonymously. Reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct a thorough investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations

Little Bird HR or a School official will acknowledge receipt of violation reports within five (5) business days if the sender discloses their identity or provides a return address. All reports will be investigated promptly and their scope is at the sole discretion of the Board of Trustees. Appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Records

The School, on a strictly confidential basis, will retain all records regarding any reports, investigations, and resolutions for seven (7) years (or as required under the School's record retention policies). All of these records will be considered confidential. All employees must immediately inform the School and Little Bird HR if they know of a potential or actual litigation, external audit, investigation, or similar proceeding.

Publication of Procedures

The Board of Trustees or their designee will cause a copy of these procedures to be distributed to all directors, officers, employees, and volunteers who provide substantial services to the School. The procedures shall be posted on the School's website and in the School in a location accessible to employees and volunteers

PROBLEM RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

It is School policy to treat employees fairly and impartially. Undisclosed problems will remain unresolved and may hurt work relationships, working conditions, and/or

operational efficiency. Because of this, the School tries to solve problems quickly, fairly and informally. If a problem arises, employees are encouraged to work with each other to discuss and resolve the issue. If they are unable to resolve their differences, they should bring the matter to the Head of School. If the Head of School is unable to resolve the issue, the matter should be brought to the Executive Director or Board President.

The School promotes a high-quality work environment for all employees - one that encourages a high level of individual and team contribution in support of organizational goals. Open communication is key to nurturing a successful work environment - all employees should feel free to look for answers to work-related questions and ask questions without fearing reprisal.

The School's open-door policy is here to give employees an effective and timely process to seek solutions to work-related questions, concerns or problems.

If you do not feel comfortable discussing a work-related concern with your supervisor, you should bring the issue to the Head of School or Executive Director.