

REVISED: February 16, 2017

Harris County

Complaint Procedures

The complaint procedure must be widely disseminated to schools. The procedure must address complaints from parents, students, staff, private schools, and the general public.

Board Policy GAE describes the complaint and grievances procedures for certified personnel. Parents/school communication is described in student handbooks and on the website. Parents are expected to address complaints or grievances beginning at the school level with the teacher first and then the administration. Central office personnel should be contacted next should parents feel the issues have not been resolved. If still unsatisfied, the superintendent should be contacted. Parents have the right to speak to the Board of Education through public participation at a Board of Education meeting. Conference forms/notes/minutes are kept on file as documentation of the issues. Complaint procedures are described and a form for documenting complaints is located in the administrative handbook. The complaint procedures describe grounds for complaints, federal programs for which complaints can be filed, filing and investigation of a complaint, as well as rights to appeal. The GaDOE address to which complaints should be filed is included in the procedure.

Complaint Procedures under the ESEA No Child Left Behind Act/ESSA

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency ("complainant") may file a complaint with Harris County Board of Education if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a violation of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the No Child Left Behind Act has occurred. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

Title I Part A (CFDA 84.010)- State Program Code 1750

Title I Part A Academic Achievement Awards (CFDA 84.010)-State Program Code 1752

Title I, Part A Reward Districts Award (CFDA 84.010)-State Program Code 1753

Title I School Improvement 1003(a) (CFDA 84.010) - State Program Code 1770

Title I, Part D Neglected & Delinquent (CFDA 84.010) - State Program Code 1755

Title I, Part C Migrant (CFDA 84.011) - State Program Code 1762

Title II, Part A Teacher Quality (CFDA 84.367) - State Program Code 1784

Title III, Part A Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students (CFDA 84.365A) - State Program Codes 1811 & 1816

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Title X, Part C McKinney-Vento Ed. for Homeless Children and Youth (CFDA 84.196) - State Program Code 1800

Title VI, Part B Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) (CFDA 84.358) - State Program Code 1847

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - (CFDA 84.027A) - State Program Code 2824
School Improvement 1003(g) (SIG) (CFDA 84.377) - State Program Code 1775

Title I, Part A - Foster Care

C. Filing a Complaint

A formal complaint must be filed in writing to the Harris County Schools superintendent or his/her designee.

The complaint must include the following:

1. A statement that the LEA has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
2. The date on which the violation occurred;
3. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
4. A list of names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
5. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and
6. The address of the complainant.

D. Investigation of Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, the Superintendent or his/her designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

1. The date the Department received the complaint;
2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which the Department may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the Superintendent will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. Either the 30-day or the 60-day timelines outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant.

D. Right of Appeal

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Superintendent's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

The complaint must be addressed to: Dr. Betty Dunlap - Director of Federal Programs

Harris County Board of Education
132 Barnes Mill Road
Hamilton, GA 31811
(706)628-4206
dunlap-b@harris.k12.ga.us