

Winterberry Charter School
Anchorage, Alaska
POLICY MANUAL

Disagreement Resolution Process

Purpose

This policy serves as a general guideline for all students, parents, staff, and employees (referred to as “community members” throughout this document) of Winterberry Charter School (WCS). The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and directions for the informal, early, efficient, and complete resolution of disagreements between members of the school community. The objective is to perpetuate a climate of collegiality and mutual trust by facilitating the resolution of differences in a direct, timely, objective, and respectful manner.

Background

Disagreement may arise in any community. Such differences are an inevitable consequence of human interaction. In a majority of these situations, the parties involved can resolve the issue through direct personal communication. In our school community, complete resolution without lingering negative feelings is important for maintaining healthy relationships between the adults in our community and to insulate our students from the effects of negative adult interactions. The following procedure is designed to assist in the resolution of disagreements in a manner that recognizes the dignity of all persons involved.

Scope

This procedure deals with disagreements that are not covered by other established school policies, employee negotiated agreements, or established Anchorage School District (ASD) procedures for exempt employees. In cases where it is unclear whether this policy or another policy should apply, the Principal/Administrator shall make the determination.

This policy is not applicable to:

1. Matters of discipline of specific students;
2. Personnel matters related to specific employees, other than the school Administrator;
3. Allegations of criminal activity;
4. Acts or conditions tending to create immediate risk of serious harm to health or safety of others; and/or
5. Issues involving established school policy that should be referred to and handled by the school Principal/Administrator and/or the appropriate school committee.

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Initiation of Process

In the event of a disagreement that merits further discussion for a complete resolution and in order to initiate the procedures of this policy, any involved party shall complete a “Concern Form” available at the school office or on the school website. The form will be delivered to the Principal/Administrator. If a disagreement is brought to any body or individual without a Concern Form, the body or individual may insist that such a form be completed. This is consistent with the practice of open and direct communication taken up by our community.

WCS is dedicated to the use of nonviolent communication (NVC) techniques. To this end, either party in a dispute may request the aide of a trained NVC facilitator to assist at any of the resolution levels. A list of trained facilitators is kept at the WCS office and is available to either party upon their request. WCS staff will coordinate with the facilitators to ensure their availability to work with the parties to reach resolution.

Levels of Resolution

Level 1: Direct Resolution

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And include a clear concise statement of the complaint or dispute, a statement of the steps of the complaint process followed or reasons it was not followed, and a proposed remedy or solution.

Level 7: School Board Review

A party to the dispute or complaint may request that the School Board review the Superintendent's decision. The decision will be presented as a Board Memorandum for approval, modification, or rejection, and the Board will take such action as it deems appropriate.

Level 8: Municipal Ombudsman

A party to the dispute or complaint may request that the Municipal Ombudsman review the School Board's decision.

Exceptions

These provisions for administrative review of a complaint do not preclude an employee's right to a judicial review of the actions of the WCC and/or the Administrator on a writ of a certiorari.

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