

R 9130 PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

A. Community Complaints and Inquiries

It is expected that citizens of the community will make every effort to resolve problems involving teachers or administrators with the personnel involved. The Superintendent must be consulted on all matters involving school personnel and the community.

In carrying out the policy for the handling of complaints, the following procedures will be used:

1. Neither the Norwood Board of Education as a whole, nor any individual member, will entertain or consider communications or complaints from school employees, parents/guardians, pupils, or other citizens, but shall refer such communications to the Superintendent.
2. Complaints and inquiries should be written, in as brief a form as possible and sent to the Superintendent.
3. The Superintendent will make every effort to resolve the problem with the person(s) immediately involved.
4. When satisfaction has not been received at this level, the Board will accept complaints or inquiries submitted in writing.
5. Persons requesting a hearing from the Board shall present their complaint or grievance in written form to the Board Secretary in sufficient detail to permit a full understanding of the matter. After hearing the evidence submitted by the Superintendent, the Board will, if it deems advisable, grant a hearing to the interested parties.
6. School employees who are employed under a bargaining unit contract shall follow the provisions of that contract for the filing of complaints or grievances.
7. Decisions regarding complaints and inquiries presented initially to the Board at a public meeting may be deferred, at the discretion of the Board.



B. Complaints Regarding Instructional Materials

It is recognized that personal opinions differ concerning the appropriateness of contents and/or use of instructional material(s). Occasionally individuals or groups find instructional material(s) used in the Norwood Public School in conflict with their own views. The following procedures are established to provide a system to receive, consider, and act on written complaints regarding instructional materials(s) used in Norwood's programs.

1. Filing of Complaints

- a. All written complaints shall be presented to the Superintendent. The statement must be signed and complainant identified to allow for a reply.
- b. If the Superintendent receives a complaint, he/she will acknowledge its receipt and answer any questions regarding a procedure. The Superintendent will then notify the teacher(s) involved.
- c. The Superintendent will determine whether the complaint should be:
 - (1) Considered an individual request; or
 - (2) If a district-level review committee should be activated to evaluate the instructional material(s) in light of the complaint.

2. Procedure for Individual Request

- a. The Superintendent may excuse an individual pupil from using challenged material(s) in a class after the parent/guardian has completed the citizen's complaint form and met with the Superintendent or designee.
- b. The teacher will then assign the pupil alternative material(s).

3. District Review Committee

The District Review Committee shall be under the direction of the Superintendent and composed of staff members selected by the Superintendent from school personnel in those instructional areas directly concerned.



4. Materials Pending Re-evaluation

The use of challenged material(s) by class or school not be restricted until final disposition has been made by the District Review Committee. Individuals may be excused from using challenged material(s) according to the procedures for individual request as in number 2.

5. Committee Review Procedure

Within the deliberation of challenged material(s), the committee shall consider:

- a. The district's educational philosophy;
- b. The teachers' professional opinions of those teaching the same subject or grade level;
- c. Other authorities and/or specialists;
- d. The teacher's own stated objectives for using the material(s);
- e. The complainant's objections.

6. Publication of Findings

The District Review Committee's findings shall be reduced to writing and transmitted to the complainant.

7. Appeal to Board

A complainant may appeal the decision in writing within thirty days. The final decision regarding controversial material(s) shall rest with the Board of Education after careful examination and discussion of the material(s) with school officials.

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