



# Community School for Creative Education

## COMMUNITY SCHOOL Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedure

### DISPUTES ARISING FROM WITHIN THE SCHOOL/ COMMUNICATION MODEL/GRIEVANCE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

The ultimate purpose of a communication model is to encourage the growth and development of the Community School for Creative Education as a healthy community. Conflict is a part of any development or growth process and may arise in any community. An effective grievance and conflict resolution process is therefore an essential component of the communication model.

The Grievance and Conflict Resolution Procedure is a model for all members of the Community School community and is designed to address issues among the following: Between parents and teachers; parents and administration; and teachers and teachers.

#### A. FOUR MAJOR AREAS OF COMMUNICATION:

**Conflicts may include a wide area of grievances, and regard family and staff concerns.** Conflicts may fall into one of four major areas or may be a combination of these areas as listed below.

##### 1. Policies and Legal Issues

Current policies are available in the Charter School office. Reviewing policies and procedures lends information that may at times solve a conflict. The Board of Trustees at the Community School has final approval for all school policies and procedures. Issues of policy and procedures should be addressed to the Principal.

## **2. Procedures/Daily Operations**

The Principal (acting or otherwise) shall establish procedures designed to carry out the policies adopted by the Board. Procedures pertain to anything regarding the daily operations of the Community School. Procedures can be clarified by an office staff member or the Principal. The Principal serves as the primary administrator of the school. Any daily operations/procedural issues should be addressed directly by the Principal.

## **3. Pedagogy**

Pedagogical issues, pertaining to anything that occurs in the classroom, i.e. teaching, curriculum, classroom management, or teacher-student relationships should be addressed directly to the class teacher.

## **4. Interpersonal Communication and Relationships**

Concerns between people or communication breakdown should be directly communicated with the person(s) involved. The overall purpose of this procedure is to perpetuate a climate of collegiality, mutual trust and respect by resolving differences in a timely, objective and equitable manner.

If concerns or conflicts regarding policies and procedures, pedagogy, and/or community members are not resolved after following the procedures described under "Four Major Areas of Communication," the following direct communication lines should be employed.

These communication lines are the vehicles that the Community School uses to resolve conflicts within our community as they arise. These pathways form a structure and process that encourage parties involved in a conflict to reach resolution. It is emphasized that the first step in the resolution of conflicts in our community is direct communication with the involved parties. The following steps should then be initiated if issues are not resolved.

If the Principal is contacted directly by a community

member, the Principal will acknowledge the concern, review the Communication Model with the complainant and refer her/him to the appropriate step in the Conflict Resolution/Grievance Procedure within a reasonable period of time, targeting three (3) school business days.

It is the Principal's responsibility to evaluate each situation and determine if administrative support is necessary. The Principal has the discretion in any conflict to bypass LEVEL 1 and proceed to LEVEL 2 of the Conflict Resolution/Grievance Procedure if deemed necessary.

**B. LEVEL 1: Direct Resolution**

In the Community School Community a set of direct communication lines exist and include:

If you have a question or concern, go directly to the person(s) in the above areas or categories. For instance if you have a question regarding school policy, you would speak directly to the Principal. If you have a question or concern regarding daily operation of the school, you would contact an office staff person or the Principal; if you have a question or concern regarding the classroom, you would speak directly with the teacher of the class; if you have a question or concern regarding any member of the community, you would address that person directly.

If the person(s) involved are unable to resolve the conflict or complaint, the complainant should forward the complaint to the Principal.

**C. LEVEL 2: Administrative Resolution**

The administration resolution process consists of a meeting between the parties involved with the Principal or at least one of the two in attendance. An attempt at administrative resolution is to be made prior to requesting formal resolution.

The Principal shall attempt to identify a resolution that is acceptable to both parties. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution, the Principal shall

inform the complainant of the formal complaint procedure. This process should be completed within a reasonable period of time, targeting five (5) school business days.

**D. LEVEL 3: Formal Resolution**

1. If there is an unsatisfactory resolution, then the complainant must communicate his/her grievance to the Principal unless the grievance involves the Principal. This communication may be submitted in person or writing. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal may choose to address this directly or to designate another Community School employee or trustee to address the issue.
2. If there is unsatisfactory resolution or if the grievance is with the Principal, then the complainant must submit their grievance in person or writing to the Community School Executive Director, describing her/his grievance, its history, any pertinent information, and to whom or what the grievance is directed. This process should be completed within a reasonable period of time, targeting five (5) school business days.
3. If there is an unsatisfactory resolution, then the complainant must communicate his/her grievance to the Board, describing her/his grievance, its history, any pertinent information, and to whom or what the grievance is directed.
4. The Board will, within a reasonable period of time, targeting five (5) school business days, appoint a person or persons to tailor a process for resolving the complaint that best leads to its resolution within the guidelines described here.
5. The Board's appointees will review the grievance and request a written response from the party against whom the grievance has been made. The written statements will be given to both parties. (If the party against which the grievance has been made chooses not to participate, the grievance process may still proceed.)
6. The Board's appointee(s) will investigate the complaint. They may interview the parties, request a face-to-face

meeting, request additional information, or devise other ways of investigating the complaint.

7. The Board's appointee(s) will report their findings to the Board, and whether the complaint has merit. If they discover that the grievance is well founded they will recommend corrective action.
8. The Board will communicate final resolution of the grievance to the complainant and the party against which the grievance has been made, within a reasonable period of time from the completion of the investigation, targeting five (5) business days.
9. The Board's resolution process will be completed in a reasonable period of time, targeting fifteen (15) business school days.
10. The Community School Board is the final arbitrator and has the final decision in any grievance. Based on the findings of its appointees, the Board will decide what, if any, steps to take.

**E. LEVEL 4: Uniform Complaint Policy/ Procedure (UCP)**

The Community School Uniform Complaint Policy/Procedure shall be used to address all complaints which allege that the Charter School has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs. Guidelines for the UCP can be found on the school website or may be obtained in the school office.

**F. CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is fundamental to the conflict resolution process/grievance procedure that the individuals involved maintain and honor strict confidentiality regarding all aspects of the complaint and procedure.

The County shall not intervene in any such internal disputes without the consent of the governing board of the school and shall refer any complaints or reports regarding such disputes to the Board of Trustees or Principal of the Charter School for resolution pursuant to the Charter School's policies.

**Adopted: Feb. 29, 2012**

**Amended: March 29, 2018**

**Charter School Policy #: 2001**