

## What parents should do when they have a concern...

It is the goal of the Teaneck Public School District to provide a quality educational program for all students in an environment that is conducive to learning. This is achieved through the collaborative efforts of our dedicated instructional and support staff working in concert with parents and students in the best interest of all.

There are times when an individual may have a question, issue, or suggestion to be addressed by school personnel. This could be in the form of an inquiry regarding practices and procedures or it may be to express a concern or file a complaint.

This pamphlet outlines the steps that should be taken to ensure a quick and satisfactory response to any concern or complaint. During each stage of this process, we hope all individuals involved will make every attempt to resolve the concern as amicably as possible.

### Informal classroom or school complaints

1. The first step in resolving a concern, complaint, or presenting a suggestion, is to address it with the classroom teacher or school-based staff member who is most closely and directly involved. We request that you contact the school and schedule an appointment with the classroom teacher or staff member. Through amicable dialogue and cooperative agreement a resolution can usually be reached. We encourage all parents/guardians to take this first step.
2. If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved during the first step, or if the issue does not involve the classroom teacher, the parents/guardians should contact:

a) **Middle or High School level** – guidance counselor, followed by an assistant principal, then principal, if no resolution at the guidance or AP levels

b) **Elementary level** - principal

Once Assistant Principal/Principal contact is made:

- The administrator will confirm that the parents/guardians have attempted to resolve the concern with the classroom teacher or other involved school-based staff member.
- Every effort will be made for the administrator to resolve the concern or complaint as quickly and satisfactorily as possible by involving the parents/guardians and all pertinent staff members. If necessary, staff from other departments and/or central administrators may be included in this process to facilitate an amicable resolution.
- If the concern has not been resolved through the informal process outlined in steps one and two, the parents/guardians should file a formal complaint with the central administration offices.

### Formal complaints

If a parent is unable to reach an informal complaint resolution after completing steps one and two, the following explains how to file a formal complaint.

1. The first step in filing a formal complaint is to contact the Assistant Superintendent's office:

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction (201) 833-5130.

The Assistant Superintendent's office will complete a *Record of Parents/Guardians Concern* form documenting the concern and what has transpired to date.

Contact will be made with the school administrator(s) to request documentation of the information provided regarding the concern or complaint, and the steps taken to resolve the issue. If necessary, staff from other administrative departments will be included in the process.

Contact with the parents/guardians by the Assistant Superintendent will usually be made within five school days to discuss the information obtained. Following the outcome of said discussions/meetings, a letter formalizing any decisions or resolution to the matter will be forwarded to the parties involved.

2. The second level of the formal process involves a review by the Superintendent.
  - If the parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision made by the Assistant Superintendent, they may request that their concern or complaint be considered at the Superintendent's level. They must file a written request for review within 10 school days of the decision made by the Assistant Superintendent.
  - Once the written request has been filed, the Superintendent will complete a review of the documentation submitted by the building and central office administration regarding the concern or complaint. If additional input is required, staff from other central administrative departments and the parents/guardians may be involved.

- Upon completion of a review, the Superintendent will provide a written response to the parents/guardians with a decision, usually within 10 school days.
3. Only in those cases where satisfactory arrangements cannot be made by the Superintendent shall communications and complaints be referred to the Board of Education for resolution. Such complaints must be submitted in writing to the Board Secretary c/o One Merrison Street, Teaneck, NJ 07666, with copies to the Superintendent of Schools.

The Board of Education encourages that any misunderstandings or disputes between the public and school district staff should, whenever possible, be settled by direct, informal discussions among the interested parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve differences that a complaint shall be referred to the Superintendent or designee.

**Note:** *The procedures outlined here are not to be used for resolving complaints that are specifically governed by other existing state or local regulations, such as student suspensions and expulsions, employee grievances, special education appeals, student transfers, request for information under the New Jersey Public Information Act, and request for reasonable accommodations/modification under the Americans With Disabilities Act.*



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**General Inquiries**

For general inquiries concerning the school system's policies, please visit our website at [www.teaneckschools.org](http://www.teaneckschools.org)

The Teaneck public school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices.

*A Parent/Guardian's Guide to*

**Resolving**

**School**

**Concerns and**

**Complaints**



Teaneck Public Schools  
One Merrison Street  
Teaneck, NJ 07666