

## **School District of Lower Merion**

### **Complaint Resolution Process for Federal Programs**

#### **Introduction**

In accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), legislation requires state education agencies to adopt written procedures to resolve any complaint alleging violations of the law in the administration of programs.

The School District of Lower Merion follows these procedures:

#### **Definition**

A “complaint” is a written, signed statement filed by an individual or an organization. It must include:

- a. A statement that PDE or the School District of Lower Merion has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulations which apply to programs under the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- b. The facts on which the statement is based.
- c. Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence with PDE or the district regarding the complaint.

#### **Local Complaint Procedures**

- 1) Referral** – Complaints against the School District of Lower Merion will be received in writing by the building principal.
- 2) Acknowledgment** – The principal will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing.
- 3) Investigation** – The principal will thoroughly investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve the complaint informally. If an informal resolution satisfactory to the complainant is reached no further investigation or action by the District is required. If the problem cannot be informally resolved, it will be referred to the Federal programs Coordinator.
- 4) Opportunity to Present Evidence** – The Federal Programs Coordinator may, in his or her discretion, provide for the complainant and/or the complainant’s representative to present evidence. Such a presentation may include the opportunity for each side to question parties to the dispute and any of their witnesses.
- 5) Report and Recommended Resolution** – Once the Federal Programs Coordinator has finished further investigation and taking of evidence, he or she will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. The Federal programs

Coordinator will issue the report to the complainant, complainant's representative, Superintendent, and building Principal.

- 6) **Right to Appeal** – In appropriate cases, the complainant may appeal from the recommended resolution to the Secretary of the Education of the Commonwealth.
- 7) **Follow-Up** – The Federal Program Coordinator will ensure that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.
- 8) **Time Limit** – The period between School District's receipt of a complaint and its resolution within the district shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days.

### **Filing a Complaint**

Complaints should be addressed as follows:

Building Principal

Dr. Lorraine DeRosa, Coordinator of Federal Programs

Susan McCrone, Chief

Division of Federal Programs

Pennsylvania Department of Education

333 Market Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333