

Procedure – Equal Employment Opportunities

Nondiscrimination

The district shall provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants and employees in recruitment, hiring, retention, assignment, transfer, promotion and training. The district shall also make reasonable accommodation to the known sensory, mental or physical limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled applicant or employee unless an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the district program.

In cases where employees or applicants believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their legally protected status, the employee or applicant may file a complaint using the grievance process set forth in this procedure. No person shall be retaliated against because of the utilization of these procedures. The executive director of human resources or designee shall investigate all allegations of noncompliance or discrimination.

Informal Review Process

At the employee's option, attempts will be made to resolve complaints of discrimination informally, expeditiously and at the closest point of administrative responsibility to the alleged offense. Informal complaints shall be discussed with the immediate supervisor or the executive director of human resources. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the employee may proceed to the formal review procedures. During the course of the informal process, the district will notify the complainant of his/her right to file a formal complaint.

Formal Process

Level One – Complaint to District

- All formal complaints will be in writing and will set forth the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to be in violation of federal or state anti-discrimination laws.
- Complaints may be submitted by mail, fax, e-mail or hand-delivery to the Title IX Coordinator:
Debby Carter, 20420 68th Avenue W., Lynnwood, WA 98036;
carterd@edmonds.wednet.edu. Any district employee who receives a complaint that meets these criteria will promptly notify the Coordinator.

Investigation and Response

- The Title IX Officer will receive and investigate the allegations set forth in the complaint within 30 days of the filing of the charge. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Officer will provide the complainant a copy of this procedure. The school district and complainant may also agree to resolve the complaint in lieu of an investigation. When the investigation is completed, the Coordinator will compile a full written report of the complaint and the results of the investigation.

Superintendent Response

- The superintendent or designee will respond in writing to the complainant within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant or if exceptional circumstances related to the complaint require an extension of the time limit. In the event an extension is needed, the district will notify the complainant in writing of the reason for the extension and the anticipated response date. At the time the district responds to the complainant, the district must send a copy of the response to the office of the superintendent of public instruction.
- The response of the superintendent or designee will include: 1) a summary of the results of the investigation; 2) a statement as to whether a preponderance of the evidence establishes that the district has failed to comply with anti-discrimination laws; 3) if non-compliance is found to have occurred, the corrective measures the district deems necessary to correct it; and 4) notice of the complainant's right to appeal to the school board and the necessary filing information. The superintendent's or designee's response will be provided in a language the complainant can understand and may require language assistance for complainants with limited English proficiency in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Any corrective measures deemed necessary will be instituted as quickly as possible, but in no event more than thirty (30) days after the superintendent's or designee's mailing of a written response.

Level Two -Appeal to Board of Directors

- If a complainant remains aggrieved as a result of the superintendent's or designee's decision, the complainant may appeal the decision to the district board of directors, by filing a written notice of appeal with the secretary of the board within ten (10) calendar days following the date upon which the complainant received the response.
- The board will schedule a hearing to commence by the twentieth (20th) calendar day following the filing of the written notice of appeal, unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant and the superintendent or for good cause.
- Both parties will be allowed to present such witnesses and testimony as the board deems relevant and material.

Decision

- Unless otherwise agreed to by the complainant, the board will render a written decision within thirty (30) calendar days following the filing of the notice of appeal and provide the complainant with a copy of the decision.
- The decision will be provided in a language that the complainant can understand which may require language assistance for complainants with limited English proficiency in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.
- The decision will include notice of the complainant's right to appeal to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and will identify where and to whom the appeal must be filed. The district will send a copy of the appeal decision to the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Level Three - Complaint to the Superintendent of Public Instruction

- If a complainant remains aggrieved with the decision of the board of directors, or if the district fails to comply with this procedure, the complainant may file a complaint with the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- A complaint must be received by the Superintendent of Public Instruction on or before the twentieth (20th) calendar day following the date upon which the complainant received written notice of the board of directors' decision, unless the Superintendent of Public Instruction grants an extension for good cause. Complaints may be submitted by mail, fax, electronic mail, or hand delivery.
- A complaint must be in writing and include: 1) A description of the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to violate applicable anti-discrimination laws; 2) The name and contact information, including address, of the complainant; 3) The name and address of the district subject to the complaint; 4) A copy of the district's complaint and appeal decision, if any; and 5) A proposed resolution of the complaint or relief requested. If the allegations regard a specific student, the complaint must also include the name and address of the student, or in the case of a homeless child or youth, contact information.

Investigation, Determination and Corrective Action

- Upon receipt of a complaint, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction may initiate an investigation, which may include conducting an independent on-site review. OSPI may also investigate additional issues related to the complaint that were not included in the initial complaint or appeal to the superintendent or board.
- Following the investigation, OSPI will make an independent determination as to whether the district has failed to comply with RCW 28A.642.010 or Chapter 392-190, WAC and will issue a written decision to the complainant and the district that addresses each allegation in the complaint and any other noncompliance issues it has identified. The written decision will include corrective actions deemed necessary to correct noncompliance and documentation the district must provide to demonstrate that corrective action has been completed.
- All corrective actions must be completed within the timelines established by OSPI in the written decision unless OSPI grants an extension. If timely compliance is not achieved, OSPI may take action including but not limited to referring the district to appropriate state or federal agencies empowered to order compliance.
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A complaint may be resolved at any time when, before the completion of the investigation, the district voluntarily agrees to resolve the complaint. OSPI may provide technical assistance and dispute resolution methods to resolve a complaint.

Level Four - Administrative Hearing

A complainant or school district that desires to appeal the written decision of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction may file a written notice of appeal with OSPI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date of receipt of that office's written decision. OSPI will conduct a formal administrative hearing in conformance with the Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 34.05, RCW.

Mediation

At any time during the complaint procedure set forth in WAC 392-190-065 through 392-190-075, a district may, at its own expense, offer mediation. The complainant and the district may agree to extend the complaint process deadlines in order to pursue mediation.

The purpose of mediation is to provide both the complainant and the district an opportunity to resolve disputes and reach a mutually acceptable agreement through the use of an impartial mediator. Mediation must be voluntary and requires the mutual agreement of both parties. It may be terminated by either party at any time during the mediation process. It may not be used to deny or delay a complainant's right to utilize the complaint procedures.

Mediation must be conducted by a qualified and impartial mediator who may not: 1) Be an employee of any school district, public charter school, or other public or private agency that is providing education related services to a student who is the subject of the complaint being mediated; or 2) Have a personal or professional conflict of interest. A mediator is not considered an employee of the district or charter school or other public or private agency solely because he or she serves as a mediator.

If the parties reach agreement through mediation, they may execute a legally binding agreement that sets forth the resolution and states that all discussions that occurred during the course of mediation will remain confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent complaint, due process hearing or civil proceeding. The agreement must be signed by the complainant and a district representative who has authority to bind the district.

Preservation of Records

The files containing copies of all correspondence related to each complaint communicated to the district and the disposition, including any corrective measures instituted by the district, shall be retained in the office of the district compliance officer for a period of five (5) years.

Affirmation Action

In accordance with state and federal requirements, the district shall develop an Affirmative Action Plan. Such a plan shall include a workforce analysis, an analysis of activities designed to take appropriate affirmative action, and a grievance procedure.

The superintendent or designee shall be responsible for the development, implementation and reporting of the Affirmative Action Plan. The overall responsibility for monitoring and auditing this plan shall be assigned to the human resources department.

Adopted: 11.01.18
Edmonds School District
Revised: