



POLICY TITLE: Community Complaint Policy	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: September 30, 2011	MOST RECENTLY UPDATED: October 26, 2015

PURPOSE

When a parent or community member reaches out to the DC Public Charter School Board (“PCSB”) with a complaint against a school, the primary goal is to ensure that the school has (a) followed its complaint process in order to address the parent’s concern (See *D.C. Code § 38-1802.04(c)(13)*); (b) is in compliance with its charter and charter agreement; and (c) has not violated any applicable laws.

POLICY

Before contacting PCSB, parents and community members who have concerns or unresolved issues with public charter schools should follow these steps:

1. Ask for and follow the school’s formal parent complaint process.
2. Contact the school’s Board of Trustees, if, after following the complaint process, the school is unresponsive or unwilling to assist in resolving the issue in a timely manner.
 - If the school has not provided the parent with the contact information for members of the Board, PCSB will provide that information.

When a parent or community member lodges a complaint, a PCSB staff member will ask a series of questions, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Caller’s contact information, including call-back number and email
- Information about the student (student grade level, IEP status), if applicable
- Whether this is the first time the individual is calling to report this complaint to PCSB
- Confirmation that the caller has asked for a copy of the school’s complaint process, including date(s) and whether or not the school has provided the process
- The explicit steps that the caller has made as per the school’s complaint process, including any evidence of responsiveness and unresponsiveness of the school, including date(s)
- The date(s) the caller has contacted the school’s Board of Trustees and the result of this contact
- A detailed account of the complaint

PCSB will capture the caller's narrative in an unfiltered script. Within two business days, PCSB will notify the school's complaint point of contact and its designated Board of Trustees member of the complaint via email, and include the complaint itself (either the email or a phone call summary).

Within five business days, the school must respond to PCSB via email or phone acknowledging receipt of the complaint and provide information regarding the steps the school has taken to address the concern.

Within seven business days of receiving a complaint, PCSB will follow up with parents by phone or email to inquire on the status of the complaint. If the complaint has not been resolved, PCSB may contact the school for more information.

PCSB considers a complaint "closed" when the school has documented that it has made a good faith effort to address the concern.

In serious situations that may implicate the health and safety of students or staff (such as allegations of corporal punishment or sexual misconduct or abuse), a more expedient response from the school is required. PCSB will alert the necessary authorities including the Metropolitan Police Department and/or Child Family Services Agency and may visit the school.

If allegations are made against a school that the school denies, PCSB may conduct a desk audit or onsite audit to determine the legitimacy of the allegations. This may occur in complaints alleging academic dishonesty, manipulation of school attendance data, or failing to follow the school's discipline policy.

The outcomes or resolutions of all complaints will be documented for PCSB's records. Intermittently and/ or at the end of the school year, PCSB will share with each school the aggregate complaints received for that school.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:



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Darren Woodruff
DC PCSB Board Chair

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