

Response to Grievances Filed by Students and the General Public

This Response to Grievances Filed by Students and the General Public Policy resainds and supersedes all previous policy, memoranda, and/or guidance promulgated by DOPS on this subject matter.

mandenin De staden

October 1, 2021

I. PURPOSE AND SOOPE

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is committed to ensuring every student feels loved, challenged, and prepared to positively influence society and thrive in life by providing rigorous and inclusive learning environments for all students. To meet this commitment, DCPS is focused on creating an environment in which we eliminate opportunity gaps, interrupt institutional bias, and remove barriers to academic and social success, particularly for students of color. To promote an equitable environment free of discrimination, DCPS provides the most support where the greatest disparities have persisted.

Upholding DOPS mission to provide a nurturing, inclusive, and affirming environment for all students, the Comprehensive Alternative Resolution and Equity (CARE) team provides a mechanism for the reporting of improper and/or discriminatory treatment by a DOPS employee, volunteer, contractor or student.

This policy conveys how grievances related to allegations of improper and/or discriminatory treatment; instances in which the rights of students, or any individual student, are being denied or abridged; or instances in which any student or group of students is being subjected to an arbitrary or unreasonable regulation, procedure, or standard of conduct; can be made and the manner in which DCPS will respond. This policy applies to all DCPS students and the general public.¹

This policy rescinds and supersedes all previous policy, memoranda, and guidance promulgated by DCPS on this subject matter.

II. AUTHORITY AND APPLICABLE LAW²

Federal Law	 Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. § 1681 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq. Title VI of the Givil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.

¹ Labor Management and Employee Relations investigates complaints involving staff. The Office of Integrity (OOI) also address complaints filed involving staff. For more information contact dcps.lmer@k12.dc.gov or dcps.lmer@k12.dc.gov or dcps.lmer@k12.dc.gov or dcps.lmer@k12.dc.gov page/office-integrity-online-referral-form.

² Nothing in this policy will supersede federal, state, or local law.

instances in which any student or group of students is being subjected to an arbitrary or unreasonable regulation, procedure, or standard of conduct improper treatment.

means a complaint that is filed to report improper treatment. Grievances may fall under the civil rights or general category.

means a person in each school responsible for receiving grievances, ensuring grievances are properly reported, supporting the investigati q0.000009120 1 193.82 669.22 Tm0 g0

IV. REQUIREMENTS

Every DOPS student has rights, including the right to be protected from prohibited behaviors. These grievance procedures were established to protect the rights of students and third parties while in a DCPS public school or participating in a DCPS-sponsored activity.⁶

Grievances may be brought to report improper treatment, including, but not limited to, instances in which it is alleged that:

A student or group of students is being denied access to an adequate educational opportunity; The rights of a student or group of students are being denied or abridged;

A student or group of students is being subjected to an arbitrary or unreasonable regulation. procedure, or standard of conduct;

A student or group of students is being denied participation in any school activity for which the student is eligible; and

A student or group of students is a victim of bullying or harassment, including sexual harassment.

Grievances can also be filed for any other violation of a right granted by law that does not have a specific grievance procedure or hearing process provided by DOPS policy.

Α.

The DCPS grievance process has three steps: (1) grievance reporting, (2) agency acknowledgment and support, and (3) investigation, analysis, and resolution.

1. Grievance Reporting

Grievances can be reported in the following ways:

Verbally: The reporter or aggrieved speaks with the principal, grievance POC, any school staff, or the DOPS central office Comprehensive Alternative Resolution and Equity (CARE) Team⁷ in person or via telephone.

Writing: The reporter or aggrieved contacts the principal, grievance POC, any school staff, or CARE Team via email at dcps.care@k12.dc.gov, via telephone at (202) 442-5405, hard-copy delivery, or through the online form available at https://dcps.dc.gov/page/grievance-form.

All grievance filings alleging a civil rights allegation must be reported to the CARETeam, either directly by the reporter or by the staff member who received the grievance at the school.

2. Agency Acknowledgement and Support

Within one (1) school day of the reporting, the parties will receive an acknowledgement via e-mail containing a unique case identifier, the allegations, next steps in the investigatory process, the assigned

⁵ 5-E DOMR § 2401.

⁶ These grievance procedures will extend beyond schools or DCPS-sponsored activities when one or more DCPS student is involved, and the educational environment is impacted.

Additional information about the CARE Team is available online at http://dcps.dc.gov/page/studentparentvisitorgrievance-process.