PUBLIC CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the School Committee, they will first be referred through the proper administrative channels for a solution before investigation or action by the Committee. In general, exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations. The School Committee endeavors to provide an atmosphere of safety for any community member who wishes to bring forward a complaint.

The School Committee believes that the complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

Any complaint having to do with a program, a service, or the condition of the school facilities will be first presented to the Principal.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant. No employee of the School Committee shall take any retaliatory action or allow any such action to be taken in response to complaints or concerns raised by any person.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired. Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Committee as a whole or to a Committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for review and possible resolution.

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated by the Committee, the complainant must submit the complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will not be addressed.

The School Committee and Superintendent will develop regulations and procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedures will require that an employee who is the object of a complaint be informed within 10 school days and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as they see them.
If it appears necessary, the administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Committee for a formal hearing. Statutory restrictions on executive sessions will be observed.

The Committee may hear the complaint. However, under the Education Reform Act of 1993, personnel actions may only be taken by school administration.

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is resolved, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

LEGAL REFS: MG.L. 76:5  
603 CMR 26.00