

The Vanguard School

POLICY: Vanguard GBA – Grievance Policy

POLICY ADOPTED: 4-19-23

The Vanguard School values open and proactive communication among and between the members of the school community, including parents, students, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board. Accordingly, the Board of Directors of The Vanguard School has adopted this Grievance Policy to serve as the formal process for settling differences both promptly and equitably at the lowest possible administrative level.

The Vanguard School's procedures (outlined below) guide how faculty, staff, parents, and students are expected to express grievances about other members of the school community. The administration and Board both expect that conflict will be addressed and proactively dealt with following the fewest steps of the procedures below. However, if the conflict is not resolved at the lowest faculty or administrative level, the guidelines below provide a process for resolving the conflict.

Should a student or parent fail to begin the process at the lowest possible level, and instead go directly to the Principal or Executive Director with a concern about a teacher or other individual, the Principal or Executive Director shall use their discretion to redirect the grievant to the appropriate person. Similarly, grievances sent directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member, would be directed to the appropriate level in the process. This discretion would be based on legal implications, privacy, and a number of other factors. Importantly, discussion of a personnel issue with someone not in a position of authority nor otherwise involved in the conflict resolution process as outlined herein is gossip and is not acceptable.

1. Address Issue with Those Directly Involved

The grievant brings the situation or concern to the attention of those directly involved. If satisfactory resolution cannot be realized at this level, each party shall write his or her position on the issue and a proposal for resolution and proceed with the next level.

These written position papers should:

- a. describe the incident, decision, or practice that gave rise to the grievance;
- b. cite the contract, policy, or procedure that has been violated and/or rationale for concern;
- c. describe what conflict resolution strategies were attempted; and
- d. explain what corrective action is being requested.

2. Address Issue with Increasing Authorities

These position papers will be reviewed by the person at the appropriate level of authority, that is the next person in the administrative line up from the person to whom the grievance is against.

This next level up is referred to as either “the reviewing authority” or “the facilitator.” The reviewing authority may deem it necessary to meet with one or both parties to gain a better understanding of the situation. Each reviewing authority shall note their decision in writing. This level will repeat until and including the Principal is reached.

If the grievance is escalated to the Principal, it is expected to reach the Principal within ten (10) business days of the initial incident. It is the Principal’s responsibility to manage the ultimate resolution of conflicts among parents, students, faculty, and staff, excepting those that pertain to the Principal him/herself or to a Principal’s execution of a school-wide policy or procedure.

If the grievance is regarding the Principal or a decision by the Principal, the Executive Director shall facilitate the complaint at this level.

If the concern is regarding the Executive Director, a member of the Board, or a member of a Board-sanctioned committee, the entire Board of Directors will facilitate the grievance in accordance with level 3. Additionally, if the grievant is not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, they may process to level 3.

3. Escalation to the Board of Directors

The grievant may request that the matter be brought to the attention of the Board only if the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved at the prior levels. If the prior steps have not been taken, then the grievant should be expected to be referred to the appropriate level in this process.

The grievant brings the matter to the Board by sending their position paper to the Board email address. If this is a private matter, the grievant should still send their position paper to the Board email address, and the Board will consider an Executive Session. Grievances shall not be brought to the Board without first being submitted in writing, e.g., grievances should not be raised as a matter of Public Comment. The Board has the discretion not to hear matters that do not follow this grievance process, and the Board President will respond to the grievant as to whether the Board will review the matter within seven (7) business days of receiving the initial request.

If the Board agrees to review the grievance, the Board President will provide the grievant a written response within thirty (30) days from the date of the Board review. At this time, the matter will be considered closed.

Initial Date: 8-3-06

Revised: 11-16-22