



## GRIEVANCE POLICY

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### **SECTION 1. BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY**

#### **MISSION**

The mission of Ben Franklin Academy is to develop young adults with character like America's founding Renaissance man, Benjamin Franklin: well-read, scientifically curious, and civically engaged.

#### **VISION**

Our students will excel academically through a challenging, sequenced curriculum that emphasizes math, science, and literacy. We will be a data driven institution, focusing on individual students. Our students, teachers, parents, staff, and leaders will be held accountable for the success of our school. Finally, we recognize that an education is incomplete without fostering the arts, sports, nature, and character.

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this grievance policy is to provide procedures for resolution of questions, concerns, issues, or disputes. As Ben Franklin Academy ("the Academy") seeks to follow Benjamin Franklin's thirteen virtues at all times, it is expected that all parties will manage grievances according to these thirteen virtues. We will hold each student, parent, teacher, administration, and staff member to a high standard of behavior at all times and especially during the grievance procedure.

### **SECTION 2. GRIEVANCE**

The Board of Directors ("Board") of the Academy provides the appropriate direction and guidelines to ensure that the Academy's faculty and staff are comprised of competent, ethical, and responsible professionals and to ensure that Academy employees are free from unnecessary, spiteful, or destructive criticism and complaint. The Academy believes concerns, complaints, or grievances should be addressed constructively and in a timely manner. While the Academy welcomes constructive criticism, such criticism should be focused on improving the quality of the educational program or to equip the administration, faculty or staff to do their tasks more effectively in order to benefit the students.

This policy provides general guidance regarding the Academy's grievance philosophy as well as the required procedures for instituting a formal grievance. In general, individuals must attempt to resolve the issue with the person with whom they have a concern before instituting a formal grievance. The Academy believes that most grievances can be resolved through open and honest communication. Several of Benjamin Franklin's Virtues should be kept in mind when

attempting to resolve a grievance: Temperance, Resolution, Sincerity, Justice, Tranquility, and Humility.

If the issue cannot be resolved despite best efforts, a formal grievance may be instituted pursuant to the procedures outline in this policy.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole, or to an individual Board member, the complaint will in all circumstances be referred back through the proper channels, as outlined in this policy. Similarly, the principal shall not address a parent's grievance with a teacher until the parent has formally addressed the grievance with the teacher. The Board shall not address a parent's grievance with the principal until the parent has formally addressed the grievance with the principal.

If at any time an individual believes that any action taken by a teacher, staff member or the Principal is illegal, that person should immediately take his/her concern to the Board President. If at any time an individual believes that any action taken by the Board President is illegal, that person should immediately take his/her concern to the Principal.

### **SECTION 3. GRIEVANCE WITH A TEACHER OR STAFF MEMBER**

Thorough documentation is required as parties proceed collaboratively toward the solution of the complaint and/or concern. The complaining party must document all complaints and grievances in writing using the Complaint and Grievance Form.

#### **PROCEDURE 3.1: THE TEACHER/STAFF MEMBER**

After attempting to resolve the issue in person, the complaining party must present a completed Complaint and Grievance Form to the teacher/staff member with whom the complaining party has a concern. The complaining party must then request an appointment to discuss the specific issue with the teacher/staff member. The complaining party and the teacher/staff member should schedule this meeting in a timely fashion.

At this meeting, the complaining party and teacher/staff member should decide on a course of action and commit this plan to writing with an intent to collaboratively remedy the situation and identify action item(s) and a timeline for accomplishing the agreed upon action item(s). The complaining party is responsible for putting the plan of action in writing, including the specific action item(s) and timeline. The teacher/staff member must review the written plan. If appropriate, the plan may be reviewed periodically, and if needed, the complaining party and teacher/staff member can revise the plan accordingly.

#### **PROCEDURE 3.2: THE PRINCIPAL**

If, after the plan of action has been completed and the complaining party still feels the situation has not improved satisfactorily, then the complaining party may elevate the issue to the Principal. The complaining party must document compliance with Procedure 3.1 in the Complaint and Grievance Form and present the updated Complaint and Grievance Form to the Principal, along

with any other documentation the complaining party feels is appropriate. The complaining party shall then schedule an appointment to discuss the issue with the Principal. The Board recommends that the teacher or staff member be included in this meeting; however, this is not required.

After reviewing the updated Complaint and Grievance Form, meeting with the complaining party, and taking other steps the Principal may view as helpful, the Principal may either concur with the plan of action as developed in Procedure 3.1 or develop a new plan for resolution. If the Principal concurs with the plan of action developed in procedure 3.1, he/she must inform the complaining party. If the Principal develops a new plan, he/she must document the plan, including specific action item(s) and a timeline for accomplishing the action item(s). The Principal shall monitor compliance with the new plan and schedule a meeting with the complaining party once the Principal believes the new plan has been fully implemented and the issue resolved.

**PROCEDURE 3.3: THE BOARD**

If the complaining party continues to be dissatisfied with the resolution of the issue, then, and only then, the party may bring the concern or issue to the attention of the Board President.

The complaining party must document compliance with Procedures 3.1 and 3.2 in the Complaint and Grievance Form and present the updated Complaint and Grievance Form to the Board President. The Board President will then assign a Board member to serve as a liaison and stay in contact with the Principal, the complaining party, and the teacher/staff member as everyone tries to reach a resolution.

If the issue continues to be unresolved ten (10) school days after the updated Complaint and Grievance Form is presented to the Board President, a three-party Panel made up of two Board members and the Principal will hold a hearing with all parties. The Panel will render a written recommendation to the full Board within seven (7) school days of the hearing. The Board will then issue a final written decision in a timely manner, and no later than twenty (20) school days after it receives the Panel's written recommendation. The Board will consider the matter closed after issuing its final decision.

**PROCEDURE 3.4: THE DISTRICT**

In the event the Board issues a final written decision and the complaining party is dissatisfied, the complaining party may bring his/her written complaint to the attention of the District or Board of Education. The Douglas County Board of Education WILL NOT accept a grievance unless written documentation is provided demonstrating that Procedures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 have been followed.

**SECTION 4. GRIEVANCE WITH THE PRINCIPAL**

Thorough documentation is required as parties proceed collaboratively toward the solution of the complaint and/or concern. The complaining party must document all complaints and grievances in writing using the Complaint and Grievance Form.

**PROCEDURE 4.1 – THE PRINCIPAL**

After attempting to resolve the issue in person, individuals must present the completed Complaint and Grievance Form to the Principal and request an appointment to discuss the specific issue with the Principal. The individual and the Principal should schedule this meeting in a timely fashion. At this meeting, the individual and Principal should decide on a course of action and commit this plan to writing with an intent to collaboratively remedy the situation and identify action item(s) and a timeline for accomplishing the agreed upon action item(s). If appropriate, this plan will be reviewed periodically. And, if needed, the individual and Principal can revise the plan accordingly.

**PROCEDURE 4.2: THE BOARD**

If the complaining party continues to be dissatisfied with the resolution of the issue, then, and only then, the party may bring the concern or issue to the attention of the Board President.

The complaining party must document compliance with Procedure 4.1 in the Complaint and Grievance Form and present the updated Complaint and Grievance Form to the Board President. The Board President will then assign a Board member to serve as a liaison and stay in contact with the Principal and the complaining party as everyone tries to reach a resolution.

If the issue continues to be unresolved ten (10) school days after the updated Complaint and Grievance Form is presented to the Board President, a three-party Panel made up of two Board members and the Chair of the School Accountability Committee will hold a hearing with all parties. The Panel will render a written recommendation to the full Board within seven (7) school days of the hearing. The Board will then issue a final written decision in a timely manner, and no later than twenty (20) school days after it receives the Panel’s written recommendation. The Board will consider the matter closed after issuing its final decision.

**PROCEDURE 3.4: THE DISTRICT**

In the event the Board issues a final written decision and the complaining party is dissatisfied, the complaining party may bring his/her written complaint to the attention of the District or Board of Education. The Douglas County Board of Education WILL NOT accept a grievance unless written documentation is provided demonstrating that Procedures 4.1 and 4.2 have been followed.

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**POLICY HISTORY:**

Original: approved by the board XXXXXX