

SOUTH EASTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Complaint Process for Private School Officials

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Acts (ESSA), the South Eastern School District is required to provide to eligible private school children, their teachers, and their families Title I services or other benefits that are equitable to those provided to eligible public school children, their teachers, and their families. Private school officials have recourse through the complaint process if they do not believe their eligible children, teachers, or families are receiving equitable services.

Aspects of the complaint process that the private school officials should know:

- The private school official is encouraged to communicate with the Superintendent (or designee) of the South Eastern School District if their eligible children, teachers, or families are not receiving equitable services, if the school district did not engage in a timely and meaningful consultation process, or if the school district did not give due consideration to the views of the private school official. Any dispute regarding the accuracy of low-income data for private school students also can be the subject of a complaint. The following Complaint Resolution Procedures will be implemented:
1. **Referral**—Complaints will be received by the Superintendent (or designee).
 2. **Notice to District Staff**—The Superintendent (or designee) will notify the district's Title 1 Coordinator that a complaint or appeal has been received, will provide a copy, and will direct the Title 1 Coordinator to respond.
 3. **Investigation**—After receiving the Title 1 Coordinator's response, the Superintendent (or designee) will determine whether further investigation is necessary. If necessary, the Superintendent (or designee) may carry out an independent investigation.
 4. **Opportunity to Present Evidence**—The Superintendent (or designee) may, in his or her discretion, provide for the complainant, the complainant's representative, or both, and the district the opportunity to present evidence. Such presentation may include the opportunity for each side to question parties to the dispute and any of their witnesses.
 5. **Report and Recommended Resolution**—Once the Superintendent (or designee) has finished any investigation and taking of evidence, he or she will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint or appeal. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint or appeal, the nature of the complaint or appeal, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. The Superintendent (or designee) will issue the report to all parties to the complaint or appeal. The recommended resolution will become effective upon issuance of the final report.
 6. **Follow-up**—The Superintendent (or designee) will insure that the resolution of the complaint or appeal is implemented.
 7. **Time Limit**—The period between the district's receipt of a complaint or appeal and its resolution shall not exceed forty-five (45) calendar days.
 8. **Extension of Time Limit**—The Superintendent (or designee) may extend the 45 day time limit if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to a particular complaint or appeal.
 9. **Right to Appeal**—Either party may appeal the final resolution to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

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- If a resolution is not possible, a private school official has the right to appeal to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The following are the Complaint Resolution Procedures published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education:
1. **Referral**—Complaints against LEAs or appeals from LEA decisions regarding complaints will be referred to the Regional Coordinator for the LEA against which the complaint has been filed.
 2. **Notice to LEA**—The Regional Coordinator will notify the LEA's superintendent or chief administrative officer that a complaint or appeal has been received, will provide a copy, and will direct the LEA to respond.
 3. **Investigation**—After receiving the LEA's response, the Regional Coordinator will determine whether further investigation is necessary. If necessary, the Regional Coordinator may carry out an independent investigation on-site at the LEA.
 4. **Opportunity to Present Evidence**—The Regional Coordinator may, in his or her discretion, provide for the complainant, the complainant's representative, or both, and the LEA to present evidence. Such presentation may include the opportunity for each side to question parties to the dispute and any of their witnesses.
 5. **Report and Recommended Resolution**—Once the Regional Coordinator has finished any investigation and taking of evidence, he or she will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint or appeal. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint or appeal, the nature of the complaint or appeal, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. The regional Coordinator will issue the report to all parties to the complaint or appeal. The recommended resolution will become effective upon issuance of the final report.
 6. **Follow-up**—The Regional Coordinator will insure that the resolution of the complaint or appeal is implemented.
 7. **Time Limit**—The period between PDE's receipt of a complaint or appeal and its resolution shall not exceed forty-five (45) calendar days.
 8. **Extension of Time Limit**—The Chief of the Division of Federal Programs may extend the forty-five (45) day time limit if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to a particular complaint or appeal.
 9. **Right to Appeal**—Either party may appeal the final resolution to the United States Secretary of Education.