

Commendation and Criticism of Employees¹

The board encourages citizens to communicate directly with members of individual school staffs and with district-level personnel on matters pertaining to the operation of the public schools. General comments, questions or concerns about the district can be directed to the Community Relations Office at 200 North Monroe or to an individual school office if the matter concerns a particular school. Both commendations and constructive criticisms are welcomed by the board and should serve to keep communications open between the schools and the citizens of the community.

When commendations are received by the administration concerning specific schools or employees, the commendation will be shared appropriately with staff, i.e., personal contact, note, media release, etc. When complaints about district employees are received, the board believes that they should be handled fairly and with concern for the rights of the people involved. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint initially with the person who is directly involved in the matter resulting in the complaint. To ensure prompt attention to complaints and fair treatment to involved parties, the following process has been approved. District administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing the public about this complaint process.

1. School Level²

The responsible administrator shall encourage any parent, student, or other person who has a complaint about a district employee to discuss the complaint directly with the employee in confidence and not in the presence of others. If the complaint is not resolved informally by the parties, the complainant or the employee may submit the matter to the principal (or to the immediate supervisor when the employee is not directly assigned to a school). If the principal or supervisor determines that the complaint may have validity and could affect the person's employment³, a conference will be scheduled so that both parties can present information concerning the complaint. When the complaint is judged to be invalid or regards a less serious matter that would not affect employment status, the principal or supervisor may attempt to resolve the complaint without a conference attended by both parties and shall exercise discretion as to whether to share the complaint

¹The term "employee" includes teachers, administrators, other licensed staff members, and all classified employees working for Eugene Public Schools.

²Complaint processing will start at the level at which the employee is assigned and against whom the complaint has been filed.

³No derogatory material will be placed in a licensed employee's file unless the person has had reasonable notice and opportunity to review the material. A licensed employee may make a written answer to such material to be attached to the material and placed in the file. The licensed employee will acknowledge the opportunity to review the material by affixing his or her signature with the expressed understanding that such a signature shall not indicate agreement with the contents. (See ORS 342.850[6].)

with the employee. However, complaints deemed invalid or less serious may later be deemed valid and to affect employment by nature of subsequent complaints of a similar nature.

2. District Level

If the complainant or the employee is dissatisfied with the decision rendered at the school or department level, either person may, within fifteen (15) school days, submit that complaint in writing to the superintendent. The superintendent or his or her designee will investigate the complaint. As part of the investigation of the complaint, the superintendent or designee may invite the employee and the complainant to a conference in an effort to resolve the conflict. Following investigation, the superintendent will render a decision. In arriving at his or her decision, the superintendent will consider the nonbinding recommendation of a designee if one has been appointed to investigate the complaint.

Refusal of any party to the dispute to attend a conference shall not prohibit the superintendent or designee from meeting with other parties to the dispute or from making an independent judgment about the validity of the complaint.

3. Board Level

If the complainant or the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of the superintendent, he or she may within ten (10) school days file a written, signed complaint with the Board of Directors in care of the superintendent. The superintendent shall provide the board with copies of the complaint. If the board decides to provide the complainant or employee with an opportunity to be heard, the date will be set and concerned parties will be notified. The board will discuss a complaint against an employee only in executive session, as provided in ORS 192.660 (1)(b) unless the employee requests the matter be discussed in open session.

Complaints Made Directly to Board Members

When a complaint about an employee is made initially to a board member or to the Board of Directors as a whole, the complaint process shall be explained to the person and he or she will be encouraged to follow procedures.

The aforementioned procedures are subject to and shall not deprive employees of their rights and due process provided under Oregon Revised Statutes, the Oregon Constitution, the U.S. Constitution, and respective collective bargaining agreements.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 192.660](#)

[ORS 332.107](#)

[OAR 581-022-1940](#)