

**Complaint Resolution Process – ESSA/Federal Programs
Bethlehem Area School District
1516 Sycamore Street
Bethlehem, PA 18017**

Introduction

ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to adopt written procedures for “receiving and resolving any complaint alleging violations of the law in administration of programs.” In accordance with this legislative requirement, the Bethlehem Area School District has adopted the following procedures.

Definition

A “complaint” is a written, signed statement filed by an individual or an organization. It must include:

- a. A statement that PDE or a Local Educational Agency has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulations, which apply to programs under the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA.
- b. The facts on which the statement is based.
- c. Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence with PDE or the LEA regarding the complaint.

Local Complaint Procedures

1) Referral - Complaints against the Bethlehem Area School District will be received in writing via email or certified mail by the Supervisor of Grants and Development.

2) Acknowledgement – The Supervisor of Grants and Development will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing.

3) Investigation – The Supervisor of Grants and Development will thoroughly investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve the complaint informally. If an informal resolution satisfactory to the complainant is reached, no further investigation or action by the District is required. If the problem cannot be informally resolved, it will be referred to the Assistant Superintendent for Education/Chief Academic Officer.

4) Opportunity to Present Evidence – The Assistant Superintendent for Education/Chief Academic Officer may, in his or her discretion, provide for the complainant and/or the complainant’s representative to present evidence. Such a 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 Assistant Superintendent for Education/Chief Academic Officer has finished further investigation and taking of evidence, he or she will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. The Assistant Superintendent for Education/Chief Academic Officer will issue the report to the complainant, complainant’s representative, Superintendent, and Supervisor of Grants and Development.

6) Appeal to the Superintendent of Schools – The complainant may appeal to the Superintendent of the Bethlehem Area School District after the recommended resolution is made, and before an appeal is forwarded to the Secretary of the Commonwealth. This must be done in writing via email or certified mail.

7) Right to Appeal – In appropriate cases, the complainant may appeal from the recommended resolution to the Secretary of the Education of the Commonwealth.

8) Follow-Up – The Assistant Superintendent for Education/Chief Academic Officer will ensure that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.

9) Time Limit – The period between Bethlehem Area School District’s receipt of a complaint and its resolution shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days.

Filing a Complaint

Complaints should be addressed in writing via email or certified mail as follows:

Benita S. Draper
Supervisor of Grants & Development Bethlehem Area School District
1516 Sycamore Street
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Dr. Jack Silva
Assistant Superintendent for Education/Chief Academic Officer Bethlehem Area School District
1516 Sycamore Street
Bethlehem, PA 18017

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