



6300: Grievance Policy

Purpose of Policy

VERITAS Community School is dedicated to cultivating an environment where all parties are supported, are given a chance to develop, and are listened to when a problem arises. We commit to supporting team members' professional and personal growth, happiness, and job satisfaction and to supporting families' advocacy for their child(ren)'s well-being. We realize that challenges may arise from time to time and recognize the need to provide guidelines for resolving problems and grievances.

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Content

6310 Objectives

6320 Definitions

6330 Grievance Process

6340 Grievance Steps

6310 Objective

To foster a peaceful school environment, VERITAS encourages informal resolution of disputes between related parties as the preferred method of resolution. However, it is recognized this may not always be possible. This procedure provides a mechanism to address these issues fairly and transparently by the appropriate person in a timely manner; furthermore, both VERITAS team members and families will follow this procedure.

VERITAS is committed to providing a fair, safe, and productive work environment where grievances are addressed with sensitivity and expeditiously. These policies will comply with any state and local laws in the State of North Carolina that address grievances, complaints, disputes and conflict resolution.

6320 Definitions

A grievance is any type of problem, concern, or complaint related to work, the work environment, or the school environment. It may be about any act, omission, situation, or decision that an employee may deem unfair, discriminatory, or unjustified. In the case of discrimination, harassment, or bullying complaints, employees should also use this Grievance Procedure. Both the VERITAS Employee Handbook and Family Handbook outlines the types of behavior that are not acceptable within our school.

6330 Grievance Process

The Grievance Procedures is a process that VERITAS Team Members and parents may follow in order to resolve workplace problems. The following procedures outline the way in which a complaint will be handled:

- **Confidential** – Only the individuals directly involved in the grievance or those reviewing the circumstances surrounding the issue shall have access to information about the grievance.
- **Impartial** – All parties involved will have the opportunity to present the facts regarding the situation. Before the complaint is reviewed, all relevant information shall be collected and considered.
- **Free of Repercussions** – VERITAS is committed to maintaining a workplace where employees are free to raise good faith concerns and to take necessary steps to make certain that the individuals involved in a grievance will not suffer repercussions.
- **Time Sensitive** – VERITAS strives to deal with all grievances in a timely manner. There are time limitations for each step of the grievance process and those limitations are outlined within each appropriate step.

6340 Grievance Steps

A grievance can have up to six steps outlined below:

1. Initial Action.
2. Grievance Statement.
3. Qualification for Formal Meeting.
4. Formal Meeting.
5. Appeal Process.
6. Appeal Decision.

These steps are not intended to discourage an employee from reporting to the appropriate individual a violation committed by another employee; instead, they are intended to provide guidance in pursuing the resolution of a grievance.

Step 1: Initial Action

Team Members should always aim to raise any concerns or complaints with their immediate supervisor in the informal context of their day-to-day environment. In cases where an employee wishes to raise a matter involving the actions of their immediate supervisor, this should be raised initially with the next level of management. If the matter concerns the actions of the Executive Director, this should be raised by contacting the Chairperson of the Board of Directors by utilizing the VERITAS Board of Directors Grievance Concerns email address.

Parents should raise any concerns or complaints with the person directly involved with the concern or complaint.

In cases where the grievance involves a disagreement between employees, the immediate Director should set up an informal meeting between the employees concerned as a means of resolving the matter without using the Grievance Procedure. Should the grievance be about discrimination/harassment or bullying, this may involve the Executive Director explaining the nature of the complaint to the alleged discriminator/harasser on his or her own.

Step 2: Grievance Statement

Where it is not possible to resolve an employee's or parent's concerns informally, he or she may submit a Grievance Notification Form (See 6341) by email to his or her immediate supervisor (employee) or the Executive Director (parent) within seven calendar days. If the immediate supervisor is an involved party, he or she will be precluded from listening to the grievance and participating in the decision. Instead, the grievance will move directly to the Executive Director.

If the Executive Director is an involved party to the grievance, he or she will be precluded from listening to the grievance and participating in the decision. In this instance, the grievance will move directly to the VERITAS Community School Board of Directors and the employee or parent will submit the Grievance Notification Form by email utilizing the VERITAS Board of Directors

Grievance Concerns email address. In this instance, the steps will remain the same with the Board of Directors conducting the proceedings.

Step 3: Qualification for Formal Meeting

Within fourteen calendar days of receipt of the written Grievance Notification Form, the immediate supervisor or Executive Director will inform the employee or parent of the decision to schedule a formal meeting. If a formal meeting is scheduled, it will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time and place for discussion of the complaint with all parties involved, but it will not occur later than twenty days after receipt of the written grievance and after notification to the employee or parent.

Step 4: Formal Meeting

The immediate supervisor or Executive Director will hold the meeting and render a decision; all decisions will be communicated in writing. The decision shall be made within seven calendar days of the completion of the formal meeting unless the Director and employee or parent both agree to set an alternative deadline or there are exceptional circumstances, which prevent a decision being made within this timeframe. In this occurrence, additional meetings may be held and the final decision shall be provided within seven calendar days of the last consultation.

Step 5: Appeal Process

If the decision made is to dismiss the grievance and the employee or continues to feel dissatisfied and has not yet met with the Executive Director, he or she may request a meeting with the Executive Director to appeal the decision. A request for any appeal must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director within seven calendar days of the decision of the immediate supervisor. After receiving an appeal request, the Executive Director shall schedule a meeting with the involved employee's immediate supervisor and the employee no later than four weeks from the date of the written request from the employee to have the grievance heard in an appeal. Any such discussions shall be conducted in a closed session, unless requested otherwise by the employee. Written notes of the result of the review shall be sent to the employee and the immediate supervisor within seven calendar days.

Step 6: Appeal Decision

The three possible options at the end of the appeal process are:

1. The grievance is agreed, and a resolution is decided upon;
2. The grievance is agreed in part and a resolution is determined in respect of that part of the grievance, whilst the remaining part is not considered any further;
3. The grievance is not agreed.

The Executive Director will, within five business days of the appeals meeting, unless there is an agreement to set an alternative deadline, notify the employee of the decision, as well as the rationale, in writing. Decisions at this stage will be considered final.