

**SEASIDE SCHOOL CONSORTIUM
POLICY ON REPORTING COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES
EFFECTIVE 11/09/2021**

It is the policy of Seaside School Consortium, Inc. (“Seaside”) that all employees, students, parents, and visitors have the right to voice their complaints, grievances, or concerns about matters pertaining to its schools. The following procedures should be utilized by all persons who have a complaint or grievance against any director, officer, employee, or student at Seaside. This Policy is intended to supersede and replace all other Seaside policies related to reporting complaints and grievances related to Seaside. Further, this Policy shall apply to all school campuses operated by Seaside.

1. What Constitutes a Complaint or Grievance?

For purposes of this Policy, a complaint or grievance shall constitute any perceived wrongdoing on the part of another individual, including, but not limited, instances of harassment, discrimination, bullying, unprofessional conduct, unsafe conditions, violations of the law, violations of Seaside policies and procedures, or other misconduct that is contrary to the values of Seaside. A grievance may also include a disagreement over policies and procedures that have been implemented at Seaside or student discipline decisions.

2. Who May File a Grievance?

The procedures set forth in this Policy may be used by employees, students, parents, or visitors of Seaside to file a complaint or grievance.

3. Board Level Grievances

In most instances, the Governing Board of Seaside is not the proper party to hear grievances. Any grievances including, but not limited to, those relating to specific personnel, grades, discipline decisions, harassment, discrimination, inappropriate conduct, or unprofessionalism should be made to the Principal in accordance with this Policy, except for appeals to the Governing Board authorized under Section 6. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the only types of grievances that may be filed directly with the Governing Board are those related to the misconduct of one or more Governing Board members. Where appropriate, the complainant should first attempt to resolve the issue informally, as described in Section 4 of this Policy.

A written grievance meeting the above criteria may be submitted to the Parent Representative via email, or to any other Governing Board member, utilizing the Seaside Complaint & Grievance Form available on Seaside’s website. The grievance will be investigated by the Governing Board following the procedures set forth in Section 5 of this Policy. The Governing Board member that is the subject of the grievance may not be involved in the investigation or decision-making related to the resolution of the grievance. The decision of the Governing Board on all such matters is final.

Nothing herein will prevent individuals from raising any issue during the public comment portion of a publicly noticed meeting of the Governing Board.

4. Informal Grievance

Most difficulties can be resolved simply by communicating a concern. When feasible, complainants are encouraged to first address the grievance with the other individual(s) involved. If the concern is with a teacher or staff member, contact that teacher or staff member directly to set up a mutually agreeable time to discuss the complaint. Remember that such meetings should not interrupt a teacher’s

instructional time. If the complaint involves a student at Seaside, the complainant should first attempt to discuss the matter with the student's teacher(s). If the situation is still not resolved, complainants are encouraged to discuss their concern or harassment complaint promptly and candidly with the offender's immediate supervisor or the school administration.

A complainant who has been subjected to harassment, discrimination, bullying, or similar misconduct is not required to discuss his or her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal grievance. Any criminal conduct will be reported to law enforcement without the need for filing a formal grievance.

5. Formal Grievance

If a concern cannot be addressed through the informal grievance process, the complainant may file a formal grievance in accordance with this section. Within ninety (90) days of encountering the harassment, discrimination, bullying, or other offending conduct that is the subject of the grievance, a complainant shall file a written complaint with the school Principal. Complainants should utilize the Complaint & Grievance Form, available online from the school website, or from the Principal. The written complaint shall identify the nature of the complaint, the person(s) involved in the matter, the date(s) of the occurrence, the location of the occurrence, and any other relevant information. In addition, the complaint must be signed and dated by the person filing the grievance. The complaint must be submitted in-person to the front office or emailed to the Principal.

The Principal will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable, impartial investigation of the grievance. Each formal complaint will be investigated, and depending on the facts involved in each situation, will be decided after receiving information from the appropriate individuals. Investigations may include interviewing witnesses, obtaining documentation, and allowing parties to present evidence, as applicable.

Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the written notice, the Principal shall respond in writing to the complainant (the "Response"). The Response shall summarize the course of the investigation, determine the validity of the grievance, and recommend the appropriate resolution.

If, as a result of the investigation, it is determined that the grievance was meritorious, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken against the offender. If the offender is a student, the student will be disciplined in accordance with Seaside's Code of Student Conduct. All grievances will be kept confidential to the greatest extent allowable by the circumstances and by law.

6. Appeals

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Response, the complainant may appeal the result in writing to the Seaside Governing Board. All such written appeals should be sent to the Parent Representative and include all written materials and documents considered by the Principal. The Governing Board can choose whether to hear an appeal, in its sole discretion, by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Governing Board members present at any meeting. If the Governing Board chooses not to hear an appeal, the decision of the Principal will be final. If the Governing Board chooses to hear an appeal, it may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the Principal. The decision of the Governing Board on all such matters is final.

On appeals of matters related to student discipline, the Governing Board may assign a Hearing Officer to hear the appeal in lieu of the entire Governing Board. The Governing Board may delegate any individual Board member to serve as the Hearing Officer. The appeal before the Hearing Officer will take

place at a publicly noticed meeting open to members of the public in accordance with the Sunshine Law. In such instances, the decision of the Hearing Officer shall be final.

7. Complaints Against the Principal

If the grievance is against the Principal, then the complainant must follow the procedures stated herein, except that the grievance may be filed instead with the Parent Representative. The Governing Board, or a designee of the Governing Board, will conduct the investigation and recommend an appropriate resolution. The decision of the Governing Board on all such matters is final.

8. Prohibition Against Retaliation

Seaside pledges that it will not retaliate against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this Policy, or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy. In addition, Seaside will not tolerate any form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or a concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or any other grievance. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

9. Contact Information

Principal:

Melissa Omeechevarria
Principalbeach@seasidecharter.org

Parent Representative:

Cheryl Albert, Beach Campus
calbert@seasidecharter.org

SUBMIT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES TO THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

Complaint Against Principal: Submit to Parent Representative

Complaint Against Board Member: Submit to Parent Representative or any Board Member

Complaint Against Any Other Person: Submit to Principal

COMPLAINT & GRIEVANCE FORM

SEASIDE SCHOOL CONSORTIUM

If you want to submit a complaint or grievance, you must fill out and submit this form within ninety (90) calendar days of learning of the grievous incident. A complaint or grievance shall constitute any perceived wrongdoing on the part of another individual, including, but not limited, instances of harassment, discrimination, bullying, unprofessional conduct, unsafe conditions, violations of the law, violations of Seaside policies and procedures, or other misconduct that is contrary to the values of Seaside. A grievance may also include a disagreement over policies and procedures that have been implemented at Seaside or student discipline decision.

Please review the Policy on Reporting Complaints & Grievances for more details and ensure that you are familiar with it. This form and Seaside policies are subject to revision. Keep a copy of this form for your records. No one may be retaliated against for filing a grievance or for participating in the investigation or resolution of any grievance.

I. WHO IS FILING THIS GRIEVANCE?

(A) **Full Name:** _____

(B) **Address:** _____

(C) **Phone Number:** _____ (home) _____
(alternate number)

(D) **Email:** _____

(E) **Are you the parent or legal guardian of a student alleging a complaint or grievance?**

YES or NO (circle one)

If you answered "yes" to the above question, complete sections (1)-(3) below:

(1) **Student Name:** _____

(2) **Address:** _____

(3) **Phone number:** _____ (home) _____
(alternate number)

II. THIS GRIEVANCE ALLEGES:

Please check as many boxes as apply to this Grievance.

(A) **Discrimination or Harassment Based on:** Race Color Religion Creed Sex (including gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation) National Origin Age Disability Veteran Status

(B) **Retaliation Related to Discrimination or Harassment Complaint Based on:** Race Color Religion Creed Sex (including gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation) National Origin Age Disability Veteran Status

(C) **Manner of Alleged Discrimination, Harassment and/or Retaliation:** Physical Verbal Visual Unwelcomed Romantic or Sexual Attention Discriminatory Assignments Discriminatory Discipline Other: _____

(D) Bullying: Physical Verbal Cyberbullying
Other: _____

(E) Other Concern or Complaint:

III. PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE GRIEVANCE

(A) Date(s) of Prohibited Conduct:

(B) Location(s) of Incident:

(C) Identify the accused, witnesses, and those to contact during an investigation. For each individual listed below, include, to the extent of your knowledge, the information requested below.

1. Who Committed the Prohibited Conduct?

Full Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Supervisor: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Other Contact Information: _____

2. Who Witnessed the Prohibited Conduct (if anyone)?

Witness #1

Witness #2

Full Name: _____

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Other Contact Information: _____

Other Contact Information: _____

What do they know? _____

What do they know? _____

If you are aware of other witnesses, please attach additional pages

