

PACIFIC COLLEGIATE SCHOOL
POLICY AND PROCEDURE
PARENT COMPLAINT POLICY

Rationale behind this policy:

While teachers and parents both strive towards what they believe is "best" for students, the different perspectives pertaining to these two positions (Teacher and Parent) sometimes seem incompatible. Pacific Collegiate School (PCS) is committed to listening and responding to parent concerns, but the school also has a commitment to its teachers. In order to facilitate the most productive results, parents are asked to follow a set of prescribed steps when bringing up a complaint about a teacher.

Respectful conduct is crucial:

In any kind of disagreement, and especially those concerning children, emotions can run high. To best resolve a problem, however, it is critical that all parties conduct all communication in a rational and respectful manner, and that they follow a set of prescribed steps. Most important is that the Parent must always contact the Teacher first with respect to a student's academic performance or classroom behavior. The Principal and Department Chair may become involved later, but only after the following steps have been taken:

If a Parent wishes to register a concern about a student's academic performance or classroom behavior, s/he must proceed in the following order:

Step 1: Parent contacts the Teacher by email, phone or note in faculty box. A Parent should never raise his/her concern to the teacher in the classroom or anywhere else on campus.

Step 2: Teacher replies to the Parent contact by phone or email, within two (2) business days, and either resolves the issue in a conversation or email correspondence, or schedules a meeting at school.

Step 3: Parent and Teacher meet to discuss the problem. The problem is either resolved at this stage, or the Teacher and/or Parent has the right to contact the Department Chair within seven (7) days after the Teacher response to schedule a meeting between these three parties. *Before this meeting takes place*, both Teacher and Parent will be requested to email a concise synopsis of the dispute, as each sees it, to the Department Chair. Synopses should be written as bulleted lists, not lengthy narratives. These lists will help facilitate the meeting that follows.

Step 4: Teacher and Parent meet with the Department Chair, who acts as moderator and note-taker. (If the complaint is about the Department Chair, the Parent can skip to Step 5 and meet with the Principal and/or Assistant Principal). At the discretion of the Department Chair, the Principal or Assistant Principal may be asked to sit in on this meeting, but not to participate. If the problem is still not resolved, then:

Step 5: Department Chair and/or Principal or Assistant Principal determine whether the Parent complaint constitutes grounds for action. If the Department Chair and/or Principal or Assistant Principal determine that the Parent complaint does not constitute a sufficient problem or has adequately addressed by the Teacher, the matter will be dismissed. If, however, it is determined that the complaint constitutes a legitimate problem with the Teacher's performance, appropriate action will be taken in the form of Teacher support, supervision, and/or discipline.

Records of all disputes and complaints will be kept on file:

It is important that parents know their concerns are being taken seriously. It is also important that teachers do not feel unjustly attacked or singled out. In order to protect both parties, a careful record of all notes taken at meetings, and all correspondence pertaining to the dispute, will be kept on file. But only if a Parent complaint ends in a personnel action will these notes be placed in the Teacher's personnel file.

Finally:

If the Parent is not satisfied with the determination made by the Department Chair and/or Principal, s/he has the final option of filing a formal complaint with the PCS Board of Directors. The Board shall refer the matter to an ad hoc Complaint Review Committee established by the Board. All correspondence will be passed on to the chair of that committee.

The Complaint Review Committee will investigate the matter and make written recommendations to the Board. Following Board review and action (for example, further investigation, approval, disapproval or modification of the Committee's recommendation), a copy of a written response will be given to the person(s) involved.

The Complaint Review Committee and Board will conduct their meetings in public to the extent required by applicable public meeting laws, and all involved parties may address the Committee and Board as provided in applicable public meeting laws. The parties may request additional presentation time, in the Committee and Board's discretion. The Board will note the final action or resolution in the official Board minutes.

Deborah Shurtz
PCS Board President

Carol A Goot
PCS Board Secretary

4 June 08

June 4, 2008

PARENT COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present:

Where did the incident(s) occur?

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements; what did you do to avoid the situation, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

What have you done to date to try to resolve this situation?

I hereby authorize PCS to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Complainant

Date: _____

Print Name

Received by: _____

Date: _____