

**PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of General Counsel**

501 North Dixon Street
Portland, OR 97227
Telephone: (503) 916-3274

Date: December 1, 2022

To: Board Policy Committee

From: Liz Large, Contracted General Counsel
Mary Kane, Senior Legal Counsel

Subject: Staff Analysis Report to the Board- Complaint Policy Revision

Policy # and Name: Complaint Policy 4.50.030-P

REVISED**BACKGROUND**

PPS undertook a major revision of this policy in 2018 to better align with our state obligations for addressing student and family complaints. Another revision was made in 2021 to incorporate community and family feedback on the District's complaint process. Recent input from users suggested that we needed to further clarify in policy the processes for complaints that are not "Formal Complaints" about Division 22 topics and not governed by a separate process/timeline.

RELATED POLICIES/BEST PRACTICES

The District is committed to maintaining strong relationships with our families and our community. This includes having a fair, understandable, and accessible process in which complaints can be addressed in a timely manner. Portland Public Schools welcomes expressions of concern as opportunities to learn, clarify our intentions, and engage in continuous improvement to benefit all students.

ANALYSIS OF SITUATION

The suggested revisions to this policy provides clearer expectations to the community and staff on what the complaint policy will address and how different types of complaints will be processed.

FISCAL IMPACT

These changes will incur no financial impact.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The District continues to welcome feedback on our complaint processes and will revise and refine this policy to better meet the needs of our students, families, and community.

RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE LENS Re Formal Complaints

A review of the total number of formal complaints filed since 2014 reveals that White families access the District's formal complaint process in vastly disproportionate numbers at the initial Step1 process, but the racial/ethnic distribution is not consistent at all three of the formal complaint steps. While some racial diversity was observed among the complainants who accessed the formal complaint process during recent years, it is likely that barriers exist for historically underserved and non-White populations. The proposed revisions to the policy do not reduce the availability of translation/interpretation services and assistance in completing complaints, which remain an important part of making the process more available to a more diverse community. District staff continue to work on other process improvements outside of the policy arena to make complaint resolution and access to the formal complaint process more accessible, transparent, and approachable.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION/EVALUATION and COMMUNICATION PLAN

The procedures for all complaints, including non-Division 22 complaints, are now more easily accessible on the District's Conflict Resolution Webpage, which was updated this fall. Staff will develop a communication plan to disseminate the revised policy to our community. Staff will also continue to work on internal processes and training to provide opportunities to address concerns early and to enhance the effectiveness of and experience for families with the complaint process.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the revised policy.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Redline copy of Complaint Policy
- B. Clean copy of Complaint Policy