

## **Palmetto Scholars Academy Grievance Policy and Procedures**

Palmetto Scholars Academy is a public charter school, chartered through the South Carolina Public Charter School District. The following outlines our grievance policy and procedures.

### **Grievance Policy**

Palmetto Scholars Academy values open and proactive communication among and between the members of the school community, including parents, students, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board. Issues that are not dealt with directly can become destructive to the school community and, therefore, detrimental to the learning process of our students. As adults we must model for our students a willingness to address conflict directly. As such, Palmetto Scholars Academy's procedures (outlined below) for settling differences are designed to support the School's policy of prompt and equitable resolution of disagreements at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level.

These procedures guide how faculty, staff, parents and students are expected to express grievances about other members of the school community. The administration and Board both expect that conflict will be addressed and proactively dealt with following the fewest steps of the procedures below.

**Grievance Procedures:** The Palmetto Scholars Academy's grievance procedures implement the policy and are as follows, in order of execution:

#### **1. Address Issue with Those Directly Involved**

The grievant brings the situation or concern to the attention of those directly involved within five working days of becoming aware of the grievance. Should a student or parent fail to begin the process at the lowest possible level, and instead go directly to the Principal with a concern about a teacher or go to a Board member with a concern about a Principal (for example), the person at the higher level in the policy shall re-direct the grievant to the appropriate level in the process.

#### **2. Address Issue with the Principal**

If satisfactory resolution is not realized after a direct conversation between the conflicted parties, the situation must be brought to the attention of the Principal within ten days of the above meeting. The Principal (as the "Facilitator", as long as the situation or concern is not regarding the Principal) and the conflicted parties will address the situation, facilitate communication, and develop goals for conflict resolution. The Principal will facilitate this process until resolution is realized or until an impasse is reached.

If the situation or concern is regarding the Principal, the grievant should proceed to Step 3 where the Board Chair will facilitate the process instead.

#### **3. Prepare a Written Grievance for the Board of Directors**

The grievant may request that the matter be brought to the attention of the Board only if the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved according to the steps above. In such case, the grievant shall prepare a formal written grievance with the assistance of the Facilitator identified in Step 2. The Board Chair, or designee, will then review the above process with the grievant

and ensure that the proper steps were taken before formally submitting a grievance pursuant to the Palmetto Scholars Academy bylaws. The Board will not hear matters that do not follow this grievance procedure as detailed above.

This written grievance shall:

- 1) describe the incident, decision or practice that gave rise to the complaint;
- 2) cite the contract, policy, or procedure that has been violated and/or rationale for Board-level concern;
- 3) describe what conflict resolution strategies were attempted via Steps 1 and 2; and
- 4) explain what corrective action is being requested.

If the concern is regarding the Principal, the Chair of the Board will act as the Facilitator.

#### **4. Grievance Committee Review and Recommendation**

Provided that the Board Chair, or designee, determines that the required steps were taken, the grievance will be forwarded to the Grievance Committee, which will hear, investigate and make a non-binding recommendation to the Board of Directors.

#### **5. Board Action**

The Board as a whole will determine what Action, if any, will be taken on any recommendation made to it by the Grievance Committee.

#### **6. Appeals**

An appeal request to a Board Action on a grievance shall be made in writing to the Board Chair within ten (10) working days of the action. Failure to file such a request within stated dates under this procedure shall be deemed a waiver of the right to appeal and shall end the grievance procedure.

#### **7. No Reprisal, Sanction, or Penalty**

No person shall be the object of administrative reprisal, sanction or penalty of any kind for either initiating or participating in the grievance procedure.