



Addendum C: General Grievance Policy - revised January 2018

Policy: Complaints will be resolved among the people most closely involved while preserving positive relationships, whenever possible. A ‘grievance,’ as described in this policy, is a written complaint by a student or parent that a final administrative decision violates, misapplies or misinterprets a school policy, the school’s charter or applicable law. A “grievant” is a person filing a grievance who has been affected by the violation or condition. Conflicts between any parties at Casa Esperanza Montessori should observe the following process:

1. If the grievance is related to the classroom (i.e. student grades, lessons, behavior, teacher interaction, etc.), the person involved first should seek to resolve the issue with the classroom teacher or teacher assistant, as appropriate.
2. If resolution with the classroom faculty is not possible, or if the grievance is related to school-wide policy, procedure, or administration, the person involved should seek to resolve the issue with the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School. Faculty members wishing to pursue a grievance should first refer to the grievance process found in the employee handbook.
3. If resolution is not possible with any of the aforementioned parties, the person involved may address his or her grievance to the Board of Directors (“Board”).
4. Grievances should meet the following requirements:
 - a. Resolution should first be attempted with the appropriate parties, in good faith, as outlined in items #1 and #2. The Board may refer a grievance back to the original party if this step has not been completed.
 - b. Grievances must be in writing. This allows all parties involved to work from a consistent body of information. Submissions may be emailed to: casaboard@cemcs.org; or delivered, mailed, or faxed to the school, to the attention of the Board of Directors. Grievances involving individual students or employees will only be discussed by the Board in a closed session of a board meeting.
 - c. A grievance must include: 1) a description of the specific decision at issue including the date it occurred; 2) the law, policy or charter provision the grievant believes has been violated; and 3) the desired outcome.
 - d. A grievance must be filed within 14 days of speaking or otherwise communicating with the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School in an effort to resolve the issue, as discussed in item #2.
 - e. Grievances should be filed directly by the person(s) involved in the challenged action, behavior, or policy.
 - f. Grievances should include the name of the grievant, and a valid method of response via electronic or postal mail.

5. Once a grievance is filed that complies with the requirements listed above, the grievance will be considered as follows:

a. The grievance will be referred to the Board Affairs Committee or to another committee designated by the Board (“Committee”).

b. After considering the grievance and after conducting any investigation the Committee determines necessary regarding the grievance, the Committee will send the grievant a decision regarding the grievance. The decision will be sent to the grievant within 45 days after the Committee acknowledges receipt of the grievance. If the Committee determines that it requires more than 45 days to render a decision, the Committee will so notify the grievant.

c. The Board of Directors reserves the right to notify persons named in the grievance. The grievant may request that he or she is not personally identified as the party bringing the complaint.

d. Upon receipt of the Committee’s decision, the grievant may elect to appeal the decision to the entire Board. The appeal must be filed within 21 days of the Committee’s decision. In order to appeal, a grievant must send the original grievance and the Committee’s decision to casaboard@cemcs.org. The appeal must specifically identify what errors the grievant believes the Committee made in its decision.

e. After considering the grievance and after conducting any investigation the Board determines necessary regarding the grievance, the Board will send the grievant a decision regarding the grievance. The decision will be sent to the grievant within 45 days after the appeal is sent to the casaboard email address listed above. If the Board determines that it requires more than 45 days to render a decision, the Board will so notify the grievant.

f. The members of the Committee that issued the decision being appealed will not vote on any actions or decisions of the Board.

g. The decision of the entire Board shall be final.

6. This Grievance Policy (CEM 5.5.1) is not designed to supersede or supplant federal law and parent rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as amended, 1996.

--End of Policy