

**Casa Esperanza Montessori Charter School  
GENERAL GRIEVANCE POLICY**

The grievance procedure is a process by which a student or parent of a student of Casa Esperanza can bring appropriate School concerns to upper levels of management. This is a formal process and requires rules to be strictly followed. Failure to follow procedures may forfeit your right to this process.

Title: General Grievance Policy

Definitions:

Grievance - A grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a student or a parent of a student that a final administrative decision violates, misapplies, or misinterprets a specified federal law, State law, State Board of Education policy, State rule, local Board policy, or that an employee has been subject to an unsafe working condition.

Grievant - Any individual aggrieved by a decision or condition falling under policy, accepted practices, or state or federal law.

Leadership Team - A group of named administrators, directors or leaders in a position of authority.

- Informal complaints are to be resolved at the most direct administrative level that is appropriate. The Grievant and other person(s) involved shall resolve issues of concern via personal meeting or other appropriate communication.
- Formal complaints are to be made in writing within 14 days after the event giving rise to the Grievance. The written 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.
- The person receiving the Grievance will arrange a meeting with the Grievant to resolve the issue. The setting of the meeting shall be appropriate based on the nature of the Grievance. For example, complaints related to named employees or students shall not be heard in any public setting.
- 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. Classroom faculty should make every effort to acknowledge receipt within one (1) working day, to respond to the concern within five (5) working days and to notify the person if additional time is needed.
- 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 appropriate Administrator for the grade level. The Administrator should make every effort to acknowledge receipt within one (1) working day, to respond to the concern within five (5) working days and to notify the person if additional time is needed.
- If resolution is not possible with any of the aforementioned parties, the person involved may address his or her Grievance to the Executive Director. The Executive Director should make every effort to acknowledge receipt within one (1) working day, to respond to the concern within ten (10) working days and to notify the person if additional time is needed.
- If the Grievant rejects the response of the Executive Director, the Grievant shall have the right to appeal in writing within ten (10) working days to the Board of Directors. The appeal must include reasons why the prior responses have been in error or in violation of existing rule, policy, or law and the resolution that the Grievant requests.

- The Board of Directors will investigate and may assign an external resource, a committee or specific members of the Board of Directors to conduct the investigation. The Board of Directors will render a decision and issue a written response to the Grievant within 21 calendar days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

#### Miscellaneous Provisions

1. The Grievant will be informed that the time limits set forth in this policy may be modified or extended if mutually agreed by the Grievant and Casa Esperanza. If either party wishes to change the timeline set forth in this policy, the party will request modification(s) from the other party and both parties will be required to agree to the modification(s). The School representative Executive Director or Board of Directors will confirm in writing outlining the modified timeline.
2. No person shall suffer recrimination or discrimination because of their participation in the grievance procedure.
3. A person may skip steps in the process only if their grievance is with the party named in that step. In such case, the Grievant may proceed to the next step.
4. Except disclosures as required by law, Confidentiality will be observed by the Supervisors and Leadership Team, Executive Director and Board of Directors.
5. The Grievant may be accompanied by a representative of Grievant's choice in all stages of these proceedings.
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.

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