

**Hawthorn Academy**  
**Policy: Parent Grievance Policy**  
**Adopted: September 9, 2015**



## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to clarify for parents a process by which concerns can be addressed. The Board of Directors of Hawthorn Academy (the "School") values open communication between parents, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board. The Board encourages active parent participation in their children's education, and hopes that parents will feel empowered to voice their opinions, volunteer in and out of the classroom for the School, and work as a team to provide the best education for their children. The Board also believes that individuals can generally resolve their own disputes through open, respectful communication. If a situation arises that cannot be resolved between the parties involved, then this policy will be used. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that parents understand how to pursue the resolution of grievances, concerns and disputes involving the School.

## **POLICY**

### Concerns Involving School Personnel

A parent who has a complaint involving a teacher, staff member or member of the School's administration (including the Lead Director or Campus Director) must first address the issue with the other individual involved and work reasonably and in good faith to resolve the concern.

A parent that is not able to resolve the dispute himself or herself may then raise the issue with the Campus Director. The parent should first send to the Campus Director a written complaint specifying the individual(s) involved, details of the incident(s) giving rise to the complaint, including dates and approximate times, details of an attempt to rectify the situation, and the requested solution. After sending the written complaint, the parent and the Campus Director should schedule a time to discuss the concern in person or via telephone.

If a parent's complaint involves the Campus Director, the parent must first address the issue with the Campus Director and work reasonably and in good faith to resolve the problem. The parent is not required to send the Campus Director a written complaint in this situation.

The School recognizes that a neutral mediator can often help achieve an early compromise that is agreeable to all parties in a dispute. Therefore, in the event the parent and the Campus Director are unable to resolve a complaint, the parent may address the issue with the grievance committee. Complaints to the grievance committee shall specify the individual(s) involved, details of the incident(s) giving rise to the complaint, including dates and approximate times, details of attempts to resolve the problem, and the requested solution.

The grievance committee shall be comprised of at least three (3) individuals selected by the Lead Director who are not the subject of the grievance and may include some combination of the Lead Director, Campus Director(s), counselor(s), and teacher(s) of the School. The complaint may be directed to the grievance committee through the Lead Director in writing. The grievance committee shall strive to be impartial and not take sides regarding a complaint. The grievance committee's goal is to help people identify options for resolving problems and to determine if School procedures and actions of School personnel are fair and reasonable.

The grievance committee shall promptly investigate the complaint. The grievance committee may designate an investigator or may attempt to resolve the complaint through meetings with the complainant. The grievance committee shall ensure that individuals designated to investigate complaints have knowledge necessary to conduct the investigation. All employees of the school shall cooperate with grievance committee investigations . The grievance committee shall maintain a record of each complaint. Within 15 school days of the receipt of the complaint, the grievance committee shall make a finding and may propose a resolution of the complaint.

If a parent's complaint involves the Lead Director, the parent must first address the issue with the Lead Director and work reasonably and in good faith to resolve the problem. The parent is not required to send the Lead Director a written complaint in this situation . In the event the parent and the Lead Director are unable to resolve a complaint, the parent may address the issue with the grievance committee using the process set forth above.

#### Concerns Involving Board Policy or Board Action

If a parent has a concern regarding Board policy or other Board action, the parent may communicate with any or all members of the Board in person, via telephone, or through e-mail and may address the Board during the "public comment" portion of a Board of Directors meeting. Parents may also request to be added to the Board meeting agenda by contacting the President of the Board of Directors at least three (3) working days prior to the scheduled meeting date. However, the Board President has discretion over the Board meeting agenda items and may elect not to place the item on the agenda.

Concerns that involve administrative practices or procedures should be addressed with the Lead Director rather than the Board.