

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
AGENDA STATEMENT

No. 7 b

MEETING OF July 17, 2019

REVIEWED BY:

ITEM TITLE:

PUBLIC HEARING - POLICY
Approval of revised Board Policy 1312.1 - Public Complaints
Concerning School Personnel in first reading

Superintendent
 Personnel
 Finance
 Policy Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Beth Lougee, Superintendent

CONTACT PERSON/TELEPHONE:

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:

Name

Phone

Superintendent

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Board is being asked to approve revisions to Board Policy 1312.1 - Public Complaints
Concerning School Personnel

ISSUE:

This Board policy is part of a series of policies that need updating.

BACKGROUND:

These revisions are being recommended by the Policy Committee. The revisions have also previously been presented under "Discussion" for the School Board's initial.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the policy revisions as presented.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Proposed revisions to BP 1312.1 and associated administrative regulations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

"I move that the Board of Education approve revised Board Policy 1312.1 - Public Complaints Concerning School Personnel in first reading."

BP 1312.1 PUBLIC COMPLAINTS CONCERNING SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The School Board places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in such manner that employees are free from unwarranted, spiteful or negative criticism and complaints. The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures which will permit the public to lodge criticism against staff members, assure full consideration, and protect the rights of the staff members and the district. Verbal complaints against an employee initially made to a School Board member or at a School Board meeting will be referred to the Superintendent or designee for appropriate consideration and action.

(cf. [1250](#) - *Visits to the School*)

(cf. [1312](#) - *Public Complaints Concerning the Schools*)

(cf. [4112.6](#) - *Personnel Records*)

(cf. [9323](#) - *Meeting Conduct*)

Note: When public complaints include allegations of child abuse, it is imperative that school officials consult [BP 5141.4 - Child Abuse and Neglect \(Reporting Procedures\)](#). Though a district may implement its complaint procedures in such cases, the duty to report suspected child abuse comes first. We encourage school districts to rely on the child protective agencies for resolving these complaints and determining if the child abuse report is unfounded. The following language is optional.

OPTION 1: This policy shall not apply when a public complaint involves accusations of child abuse. When a school employee is accused of child abuse, it shall be investigated by proper authorities in accordance with child abuse laws.

OPTION 2: When public complaints involve accusations of child abuse, the provisions of this policy and regulation shall be implemented only after the child abuse reporting requirements specified in law have been fulfilled

(cf. [5141.4](#) - *Child Abuse and Neglect (Reporting Procedures)*)

Legal Reference:

ALASKA STATUTES

[44.62.310](#) *Government meetings public*

AR 1312.1 PUBLIC COMPLAINTS CONCERNING SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Note: The following optional regulation may be revised or deleted in light of district needs and collective bargaining obligations.

In order to promote fair and constructive communication, the following procedures shall govern the resolution of complaints. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible stage. Complaints concerning school personnel should be made directly by the complainant to the person against whom the complaint is lodged. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attempt to orally resolve concerns with the staff member personally.

All written complaints regarding district personnel other than administrators shall be initially filed with the principal or immediate supervisor. If the complaint regards a principal or central office administrator, the written complaint shall be initially filed with the Superintendent or designee. If the written complaint concerns the Superintendent or designee, it shall be initially filed with the School Board. If the complaint is also against the district, the principal or designee shall provide a copy of the complaint to the district compliance officer so that appropriate procedures may be followed.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally by the persons involved, the complainant may submit the complaint in writing to the school principal or immediate supervisor. When necessary, the district shall assist in the preparation of the written complaint so as to meet the requirements of this regulation. The administrative staff shall inform the complainant that such assistance is available if he/she is unable to prepare the written complaint without help. A written complaint must include the name of each employee involved and a brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it. It must also include a specific description of a prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the employee involved and the failure to resolve the matter. *(Exhibit Form-Link)*

The principal or immediate supervisor shall investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the person(s) involved. If the complaint is resolved, the principal will so advise all concerned parties, including the Superintendent or designee *in writing*.

If the complaint remains unresolved after review by the principal or the immediate supervisor, the principal shall refer the written complaint, together with a report and analysis of the situation, to the Superintendent or designee. Complainants should consider and accept the Superintendent or designee's decision as final.

However, the complainant, the employee, or the Superintendent or designee may ask to address the School Board regarding the complaint.

Except when a complaint is directed against the Superintendent or designee, no party to a complaint may address the School Board, either in closed or open session, unless the School Board has received the Superintendent or designee's written report concerning the complaint.

Complaints before the School Board concerning an employee that may tend to be prejudicial to the employee's reputation or character shall be addressed in executive session of the School Board. All parties to a complaint, including the school administration, may be asked to attend a School Board meeting or part of such meeting for the purpose of presenting all available evidence and allowing every opportunity for explaining and clarifying the issue. The decision of the School Board following the hearing shall be final.

(cf. [9321](#) - *Executive Sessions*)

Note: The district should make sure that complaints heard in executive session are indeed complaints against an employee, not against district practice or procedures.