

GATEWAY PREPARATORY ACADEMY GRIEVANCE POLICY

DEFINITIONS

- A. Grievance – A complaint from any individual within Gateway Preparatory Academy (i.e. student, parent, employee) which:
 - 1. Sets forth the allegation that there has been a violation of any policy, accepted practices, or state or federal law.
 - 2. Specifically identifies the policy, practice, or statute violated.
- B. Grievant – Any individual or group of individuals aggrieved by a decision or condition falling under policy, accepted practices, or state or federal law.
- C. Organizational Structure – The hierarchy of Gateway Preparatory Academy for addressing all grievances. The organizational structure varies depending on area of alleged violation. Below is the hierarchy used for grievance procedures in this policy:

<i>Classroom Instruction</i>	<i>Special Education</i>	<i>Other Operations</i>
Classroom Teacher	Special Education Teacher	Directly involved party
Lead Teacher	Special Education Director	Business Manager
Academy Director	Academy Director	Academy Director
Academy Board	Academy Board	Academy Board

PROCEDURE

- A. Step I:
 - 1. Any individual alleging a grievance is encouraged to resolve the problem, if possible, through an informal discussion with the person or persons suspected of violation, beginning at the earliest level of organizational structure.
 - a. Student’s parents should discuss classroom concerns first with classroom teachers.
 - b. Employees should discuss concerns first with directly involved parties.
 - 2. When individuals hear complaints or receive formal grievances, they should first make sure that grievants or potential grievants have first attempted in good faith to resolve problems with directly involved persons.
- B. Step II:
 - 1. In the event that the informal discussion with directly involved parties does not resolve the issue, grievant shall file a formal written grievance form with the next responsible individual in the organizational structure. Grievance Forms are available from the office manager or from the Academy’s website.

- a. The grievance must be filed within twenty (15) working days of the date the grievant knew, or should have known, of the circumstances which precipitated the grievance.
- b. The responsible individual shall respond in writing, within five (5) working days following receipt of the grievance.
- c. If the next responsible party is the Academy Director, Step II does not apply and grievant moves to Step III.

C. Step III:

1. If the response (decision) at Step II does not resolve the problem, the grievant shall forward the grievance to the Academy Director to initiate Step III.
2. The Academy Director shall investigate the complaint with the parties concerned in the grievance within fifteen (15) working days of the grievance having been filed at Step II.
3. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Academy Director shall render a decision and issue a written report setting forth the Director's findings and recommendations for the resolution of the grievance within five (5) working days.
4. The grievance shall be considered resolved if the grievant and the Academy Board accept the recommendations of the Academy Director.
5. If no written report has been issued within the time limits set forth in "3" above, or if the grievant shall reject the recommendations of the Academy Director, the grievant shall have the right to appeal to the Academy Board for review of the grievance at Step IV.

D. Step IV:

1. A written request for the Academy Board's review of the grievance must be submitted to the Board Secretary within 10 days of the date of the Academy Director's report or the expiration of the time limits set forth in Step III.
2. The Academy Board shall review the grievance and the Academy Director's report, and may hold a hearing.
3. The Academy Board may affirm the Academy Director's recommendations, amend the recommendations, or affirm the recommendations in part and amend in part.
4. The Academy Board written decision shall be issued within 30 working days of receipt of the grievant's written appeal by the board secretary.
5. If no written decision has been issued within the time limit set forth in "4" above or if the grievant shall reject the decision of the Academy Board, the grievant shall be free to pursue such litigation or statutory remedy as the law may provide.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- A. The employee will be informed that the time limits set forth in this policy may be modified or extended if mutually agreed by the grievant, or the grievant's designated representative and the Academy. If either party wishes to change the

- timeline set forth in this policy, the party will request the modification(s) from the other party and both parties will be required to agree to the modification(s). The grievance officer will issue a letter of understanding to the parties outlining the modified timeline.
- B. No person shall suffer recrimination or discrimination because of participation in this grievance procedure.
 - C. Employees shall be free to testify regarding any grievance filed hereunder.
 - D. Confidentiality will be observed pending resolution of the grievance.
 - E. The grievant may be accompanied by a representative of grievant's choice in all stages of these proceedings.
 - F. Records of all grievances will be maintained by a designated office staff member. The records will be kept in a separate and confidential file. Information regarding grievances will be classified as private.
 - G. Gossip among Academy employees will not be tolerated. When employees have concerns they should follow the procedure in this policy to resolve such concerns. Gossip undermines the efforts of all employees to operate a successful Academy and may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:
DEC. 8, 2011