

## Appendix K: Grievance Policy

### GRIEVANCE PROCESS

A grievance is a complaint concerning the application of policies and procedures governing the personnel practices or working conditions.

Confidentiality concerning an employee grievance will be maintained to the extent that it is practical under the circumstances. No retaliatory or adverse action will be taken against any employee who initiates a grievance.

Hill View Montessori Charter School places high value on grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility. As such we encourage parents/guardians and staff to develop open lines of communication with each other for the benefit of the children attending the school. However, we acknowledge that from time to time, situations may arise that are upsetting. If a parent/guardian, student, staff member or other individuals or groups are not satisfied with a school decision, policy or act or believes that HVM has violated or is violating any provision of M.G.L.c.71 Section 89 or 603 CMR 1.00 they may do the following:

- 1. Discuss the complaint with the staff member that has direct responsibility for the problem.**
  - Within a week, take the complaint directly to the staff member involved (in the case of violation of laws or issues with school-wide policies, the Executive Director would be the appropriate staff member) to resolve the problem through discussion.
  - HVM is committed to using communication to work out problems and therefore, if needed, the two parties involved may request mediation from the staff member's immediate supervisor.
  - If the aggrieved person is not satisfied, within a week they must move to step 2.
- 2. Discuss the complaint with the staff member's immediate supervisor.**
  - If a solution is not found between the two parties involved then it should be taken to the staff member's immediate supervisor for discussion including use of mediation as necessary. If the original complaint was with the Executive Director and discussion (as mentioned in step 1) has not worked, move directly to step 3.
  - This should continue through the ranks until the complaint has been discussed with the Executive Director.
  - If the complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed after talking with the Executive Director, move to step 3. This should occur no later than a month from the original complaint.
- 3. Submit the complaint in writing to the Executive Director.**
  - The Executive Director may speak to all parties involved and will try to resolve the issue through discussions with those people. Otherwise, within two weeks, the Executive Director will give a written decision concerning the complaint, giving the reasons for the decision.
  - If the Executive Director's written decision is unsatisfactory, move to step 4 within 1 week.
- 4. Submit the complaint in writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.**
  - Upon receiving the written complaint, the Chair shall request copies of all written communications from Step 3.
  - The Chair shall convene a committee of the Board (with no fewer than 3 people) that shall meet within 10 working days to discuss the issues. Those involved in the complaint shall have a right to attend the meeting.
  - The committee of the Board of Trustees will conduct reviews to ensure compliance with the law. HVM and the specific individuals involved will cooperate to the fullest extent with the review.
  - The committee of the board shall decide on the matter by majority vote and shall respond in writing to the person issuing the complaint and the Executive Director no later than 30 days from the receipt of the complaint.
  - If the committee of the board is unable to reach a decision and/or the complaint is of such a nature that it might interfere with the normal functions of the school, then the committee shall bring this matter to the full board for consideration.

5. If the Board of Trustees written decision is not sufficient, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the Commissioner of Education.

□ **Exceptions to Procedural Steps**

HVM recognizes that there may be certain circumstances in which it may be inappropriate to resolve a problem as prescribed above. Therefore, the following exceptions are instances where some of the steps above may be bypassed to seek a resolution by the next higher authority:

- The complaint or problem involves a known or suspected violation of the law;
- The complaint or problem is clearly not within the authority of the staff member's supervisor to resolve.
- A parent, guardian or other individuals or groups, who believe that a charter school has violated or is violating any state or federal law or regulation regarding special education, may file a complaint directly with the Department of Education.

NOTE: *The time limits mentioned above are only guidelines and are not meant to be mandatory. The time limits may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties involved.*