

Gardner Valley School Grievance Policy

Gardner Valley School supports voluntary resolution of disagreements or other conflicts and firmly believes that most issues can be handled informally, without resort to any official process. Therefore, it is the GVS Charter Board's expectation that members of the Gardner Valley School community who have concerns with school personnel will address such concerns with that person one-on-one. However, the board recognizes that there may be circumstances where one-on-one resolution fails or where, due to the gravity of the situation, it is appropriate to bring one's concern to a higher authority. As such, a "grievance" is defined as an alleged material violation of GVS Charter Board policies or administrative regulations that apply to all personnel. Employees, students and the community may utilize this process to dispute unresolved grievances. This grievance process should be used only for genuine complaints, concerns, or conflicts that require the attention of the Head of School or the Charter Board, not simple disagreements that can be managed informally.

1. Address Issue with Those Directly Involved. The grievant must first bring the concern to the attention of the individual(s) directly involved. A meeting should be scheduled where the concerns can be expressed in private and in an environment conducive to resolution. If the grievant brings the concern directly to the attention of the Head of School without first attempting to address the issue with the most directly involved staff member(s), the Head of School may redirect the grievant to the appropriate person in the process.

2. Address Issue with Head of School. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached with the most directly involved staff persons, or if a complaint directly involves the Head of School, the concern may then be brought to the attention of the Head of School. The grievant should deliver the complaint in writing to the front office. The complaint shall detail:

1. the date of the incident (if applicable)
2. the school staff member involved
3. a description of the incident, decision, or practice that gave rise to the issue
4. the conflict resolution strategies that have been attempted thus far
5. the grievant's requested resolution

Within five business days from the date on which the written statement was received, the Head of School will either issue a written response to the grievant or contact the grievant to schedule a time to discuss the issue. The Head of School will respond in an effort to address the situation, facilitate ongoing communication, and develop goals for conflict resolution. The Head of School will continue to monitor the issue until either a resolution or an impasse is reached.

3. Prepare a Written Grievance for the Board of Directors. In cases when the concern has not been addressed at Steps 1 and 2 to the satisfaction of the grievant, the grievant may file a formal written grievance to the GVS Charter Board of Directors. The written grievance must detail:

1. the date of the incident (if applicable)
2. the school staff member involved
3. a description of the incident, decision, or practice that gave rise to the issue
4. the conflict resolution strategies that have been attempted thus far
5. the grievant's requested resolution

Current contact information for the board can be found on the school's website. Within 10 business days from receipt, the Board President, or his/her designee, will review the written grievance and provide a written response to the grievant either determining that the grievance warrants full review by the board or declining to review the written grievance. If declining review, the board's written response to the grievant will explain the reasons for the determination. If the Board President, or his/her designee, determines that the grievance warrants

full review by the board, the board shall review the grievance at its next regularly-scheduled board meeting. The Head of School will be given a copy of the grievance and will provide input regarding the steps the school has taken to address the grievance, either verbally or in writing, as part of the agenda item. During the board meeting, the board will discuss the agenda item and determine any next steps that should be taken. If required, the grievance will be discussed in an executive session and not as a regular agenda item. The Board President will issue a written

summary of the board's decision to the grievant within 10 business days of the meeting.

As always, the public is welcome to attend any board meeting and offer comments during the public comment period. It is important to note that the public comment period exists to allow the public to provide input on agenda items—not to air grievances. Grievants should use the above procedure for submitting grievances so the board can give the grievance (and the grievant) the appropriate respect and consideration.

All communication between a Gardner Valley School parent and Gardner Valley School personnel should be civil and respectful and abide by the guidelines laid out in the Communications Policy. If the school receives a communication (in person or electronically) that the administration deems inappropriate and/or threatening, the school reserves the right to request a redirected communication or to restrict communications accordingly (this may include limiting physical and/or electronic access to school staff).

