

Okeechobee County School Board
Equity Plan
Grievance Procedure

This grievance procedure is established to provide our customers with a process to formally file a complaint with the Okeechobee County School District and to meet the requirements of the Florida Equity Law, Title IX, the ADA, and Section 504.

Anyone wishing to file a complaint regarding alleged discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, disability, (if otherwise qualified), social and family background or on the basis of the use of a language other than English by LEP students shall follow the procedure listed below. This procedure may be used by all customers served by the School District of Okeechobee County including but not limited to employees, students, parents or job applicants.

Any employee or student who makes a complaint of harassment will be protected against retaliation.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected, as specified by law.

Within 60 working/school days of the alleged incident, the complainant shall file the complaint, in writing.

The complaint shall include the complainant's name, address, and phone number and a detailed description of the alleged incident, including date, persons involved, and location. (Alternate means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available upon request. Individuals may remain anonymous by calling the Employee Protection Line at 1-800-576-5262 to report alleged misconduct. The company code for the Okeechobee County School District is #30032.)

Step I

The complaint shall be submitted to one of the following respondents:

- A.** The principal or immediate supervisor; **B.** Julie Reno, the district's Equity Coordinator; or **C.** The Superintendent

If one of these respondents is the alleged, offending person, the complaint shall be submitted to the next highest level of administration or supervision.

The selected respondent shall meet with the complainant within 3 working/school days from the date the complaint is received, to attempt to resolve the issue. The results of the meeting shall be summarized and sent to all concerned parties within 10 working/school days after the meeting.

If the complaint is still unresolved after Step I, the complainant may proceed to the next level(s).

Step II

Upon completion of Step I, the matter shall be submitted to:

Sherry Wise, Equity Coordinator, Okeechobee County School Board
700 S.W. 2nd Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34974
Phone: (863) 462-5000, ext. 267; Fax: (863) 462-5013

The complainant shall submit the written Step I complaint and findings, to the Equity Coordinator with copies to the Superintendent, within 5 working/school days of receiving the respondent's Step I findings.

The Equity Coordinator shall investigate and file a written report of his findings within 10 days after receiving the Step I documents. The Equity Coordinator's findings and recommendations shall be sent to the complainant, the Superintendent, and the Step I respondent.

Step III

If the complaint is not resolved in Step II, the complainant may, within 3 working/school days of receipt of the "Equity Coordinator" or other appropriate official's answer, appeal in writing, to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent or the designee shall hear the complaint within 3 working/school days after receipt of the Appeal. No new facts shall be entered that were not previously considered in Steps I and II.

The complainant shall be afforded an opportunity to present evidence relevant to the facts and to the issues.

The Superintendent shall render the decision by certified mail with return receipt, within 10 working/school days after such hearing.