

Board Policy

Complaints Concerning District Employees

BP 1312.1

Community Relations

The Governing Board accepts responsibility for providing a means by which the public can hold employees accountable for their actions. The Board desires that complaints be resolved expeditiously without disrupting the educational process.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop regulations which permit the public to submit complaints against district employees in an appropriate way. These regulations shall protect the rights of involved parties. The Board may serve as an appeals body if the complaint is not resolved.

(cf. 1312.2 - Complaints Concerning Instructional Material)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 3515.2 - Disruptions)

The Board prohibits retaliation against complainants. The Superintendent or designee at his/her discretion may keep a complainant's identity confidential, except to the extent necessary to investigate the complaint. The district will not investigate anonymous complaints unless it so desires.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

33308.1 Guidelines on procedure for filing child abuse complaints

35146 Closed sessions

35160.5 Requirement for school district policies: parental complaints re employees

44031 Personnel file contents and inspection

44811 Disruption of public school activities

44932-44949 Resignation, dismissal and leaves of absence (rights of employee; procedures to follow)

48987 Child abuse guidelines

GOVERNMENT CODE

54957 Closed session; complaints re employees

54957.6 Closed session; salaries or fringe benefits

PENAL CODE

273 Cruelty or unjustifiable punishment of child

11164-11174.3 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

300 Minors subject to jurisdiction of juvenile court

Management Resources:

CDE LEGAL ADVISORIES

0910.93 Guidelines for parents to report suspected child abuse by school district employees or other persons against a pupil at school site (LO:4-93)

Policy ALPINE COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: May 9, 1989 Markleeville, California

revised: May 12, 1992

revised: September 14, 1993

revised: September 13, 1994

Administrative Regulation

Complaints Concerning District Employees

AR 1312.1

Community Relations

Complaint Procedures

The Superintendent or designee shall determine whether a complaint should be considered a complaint against the district and/or the individual, and whether it should be resolved by the district's process for complaints concerning personnel, other district procedures, or both.

(cf. 1312.2 - Complaints Concerning Instructional Material)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

The Governing Board shall annually review district policies and regulations related to complaints against school personnel. (Education Code 35160.5)

In order to promote fair and constructive communication, the following procedures shall govern the resolution of complaints against district employees:

1. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible stage. Whenever possible, complaints concerning school personnel should be made directly by the complainant to the person against whom the complaint is made. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attempt to orally resolve concerns with the staff member personally.
2. If a complainant is unable or unwilling to resolve the complaint directly with the person involved, he/she may submit a written complaint to the employee's immediate supervisor or the principal.
3. When a written complaint is received, the employee shall be notified in accordance with collective bargaining agreements.
4. All complaints related to district personnel other than administrators shall be submitted in writing to the principal or immediate supervisor. If the complainant is unable to prepare the complaint in writing, administrative staff shall help him/her to do so. After an oral attempt, complaints related to a principal or central office administrator shall be initially filed in writing with the Superintendent or designee. After an oral attempt, complaints related to a Board member or to the Superintendent shall be initially filed in writing with the Board.
5. A written complaint must include:
 - a. The name of each employee involved,

- b. A brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it, and
 - c. A specific description of any prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the employee and the failure to resolve the matter.
6. The person responsible for investigating complaints will attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the person(s) involved within 30 days.
7. The complainant may appeal a decision by the principal or immediate supervisor to the Superintendent or designee, who will attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the person(s) involved within 30 days. 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 Board regarding the complaint.
8. Before any Board consideration of a complaint, the Superintendent or designee shall submit to the Board a written report concerning the complaint, including but not be limited to:
- a. The name of each employee involved.
 - b. A brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it, sufficient to inform the Board and the employee(s) as to the precise nature of the complaint and to allow the employee(s) to prepare a defense.
 - c. A copy of the signed original complaint.
 - d. A summary of the action taken by the Superintendent or designee, together with his/her specific finding that the problem has not been resolved and the reasons.
9. The Board may uphold the Superintendent's decision without hearing the complaint.
10. All parties to a complaint may be asked to attend a Board meeting in order to present all available evidence and allow every opportunity for explaining and clarifying the issue.
11. Before the Board holds a closed session to hear complaints or charges brought against an employee, the employee shall receive written notice of his/her right to have the complaints or charges heard in open session rather than closed session. This notice shall be delivered personally or by mail at least 24 hours before the time of the session, and the employee may request that the complaints or charges be heard in open session. Complaints concerning Board members shall be addressed in open session unless a closed session is warranted pursuant to Education Code 35146 or 48918 or Government Code 54957 or 54957.6. (Government Code 54957)

(cf. 9321 - Closed Session Purposes and Agendas)
(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

12. Any decision of the Board shall be final.

Complaints Regarding Child Abuse

When a complaint of child abuse is alleged, the district shall provide parents/guardians procedures for filing a child abuse complaint with the appropriate child protective agencies. Upon request, such procedures shall be written in the primary language of the parent/guardian, and the Superintendent or designee shall provide an interpreter if needed. (Education Code 48987)

Providing the above procedures to parents/guardians does not relieve mandated reporters from their duty to report suspected child abuse in accordance with law.

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Reporting Procedures)

(cf. 4112.6 - Personnel Records)

(cf. 4144 - Employee Complaints)

Regulation	ALPINE COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
approved:	September 12, 1989 Markleeville, California
revised:	July 1, 1992
revised:	June 29, 1993
revised:	September 13, 1994

Exhibit

Complaints Concerning District Employees

E 1312.1

Community Relations

Cde Legal Advisory Lo: 4-93 Procedures For Parents Or Guardians Of Students To Identify And Report Child Abuse Committed At A School Site By A School District Employee Or Other Person

The following information, taken from Penal Code Sections 273a, 273d, and 11165.6, will assist parents/guardians in deciding whether to file a complaint of child abuse.

What is Child Abuse and What is Not Child Abuse

Child abuse is a physical injury which is inflicted by other than accidental means on a child by another person.

It also means the sexual abuse of a child.

It also means willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment of a child, or willfully inflicting unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or failure to safeguard a child from these injuries when the child is under a person's care or custody.

It also means unlawful corporal punishment or injury resulting in a traumatic condition.

Child abuse also means neglect of a child or abuse in out-of-home care. (Out-of-home care is defined in Penal Code Section 11165.5 as a situation where the person responsible for the child's welfare is a licensee, administrator, or employee of any facility licensed to care for children, or an administrator or employee of a public or private school or other institution or agency.)

Child abuse does not mean a mutual affray or fight between minors.

It also does not include an injury caused by the actions of a peace officer using reasonable and necessary force:

1. To quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to person or damage to property;
 2. To prevent physical injury to person or damage to property;
 3. For purposes of self-defense;
 4. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within the control of a child;
- or

5. To apprehend an escapee.

In addition, child abuse does not include injury caused by any force that is reasonable and necessary for person employed by or engaged in a public school:

1. To stop a disturbance threatening physical injury to people or damage to property;
2. For purposes of self-defense; or
3. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within control of a student. (Education Code 44807, 49001)

How to File a Complaint of Child Abuse Against School District Employees or Others at School Sites

Parents/guardians of students have the right to file a complaint against a school district employee or other person that they suspect has engaged in abuse of a child at a school site.

To file a complaint, the parent/guardian must file a formal report with the local child protective agency. This may be done by telephone, in person, or in writing. A complaint may also be filed with the appropriate local school district or county office of education; however, school districts and county offices of education do not investigate child abuse complaints.

In addition, if the child is disabled and enrolled in special education, a separate complaint may be filed with the California Department of Education (CDE) under the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 4650(a)(viii)(c). The CDE does not investigate allegations of child abuse. The CDE investigates conditions that may involve immediate physical danger or threaten the health, safety or welfare of the child and which may result in denial of free appropriate public education.

As defined in the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act of 1987, a child protective agency is a police or sheriff's department.

These agencies are listed in local telephone directories under government listings. Police will be found under city government listings; sheriffs, probation, welfare departments and child protective services will be found under county government listings.

The local child protective agency shall investigate the complaint. (Penal Code 11165.14)

If the complaint is substantiated, the local child protective agency is required to forward a copy of the investigation report to the governing board of the local school district or county office of education. (Penal Code 11165.14)

Child protective agencies are also required to cross-report every known or suspected instance of child abuse to the other child protective agencies having jurisdiction over the case (for example,

county welfare to law enforcement, and vice versa), to the agency responsible for conducting investigations for dependency determinations pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 300, and to the district attorney. (Penal Code 11166(g))

ALPINE COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Markleeville, California