

# GUIDE TO PROBLEM SOLVING

<b>Define the problem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather the facts – what you know and what you need to find out.</li> <li>Check your facts and sources for accuracy</li> <li>Write a clear, objective description of the problem.</li> </ul>
<b>Determine who is involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially include only those individuals who are at the point of concern and whose participation is necessary to solve the problem. For example, if your child is having a problem with a particular teacher, the problem at this point belongs only to you, your child and that teacher.</li> </ul>
<b>Meet with those involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calmly share, listen to, and acknowledge all points of view.</li> </ul>
<b>Restate the problem together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start by listing points of agreement. Move to the question that you need to address together.</li> </ul>
<b>Identify solutions and their consequences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer and consider all options. Be flexible.</li> <li>Discuss the potential outcome of each solution.</li> <li>Eliminate solutions unacceptable to either party.</li> <li>Choose the solution satisfactory to both parties.</li> </ul>
<b>Select a plan of action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what needs to be done, by whom and in what time frame.</li> <li>Specify a means of assessing the outcome.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Do both parties agree?</b>  <b>If YES, follow the plan. The problem is resolved.</b>  <b>If NO, appeal to the next level of authority.</b></p>	
<b>Appealing to the next level of authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An appeal may be necessary due to the complex nature of the problem; the need for additional resources; or due to disagreement over the most appropriate course of action.</li> <li>The appeal may be initiated by a phone call, a scheduled visit, or a letter to the person at the next level. (See levels of appeal).</li> </ul>
<b>Summarize previous results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both parties should provide the person at the next level with a review of the outcome of the first meeting; the reasons for the appeal; and their recommendations.</li> </ul>
<b>Receive feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Within 10 working days</u> beyond the appeal, all parties should receive a response that includes a strategy for dealing with the concern and a rationale to support all recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>If the parties do not agree, the appeal process may be repeated, if necessary throughout all the consecutive levels of authority.</b></p>	

Note: Managers of Transportation, Maintenance, Guidance and Child Nutrition Services are not part of the appeal process and may be called directly to address specific concerns unrelated to the educational program.

# LEVELS OF APPEAL

*Remember, problem resolution always begins with those who are closest to the problem...*

Involve the

## TEACHER

To resolve issues related to classroom management; instruction; student or teacher conduct.

If there is  
no  
resolution,  
appeal to  
the

## BUILDING PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

To deal with issues related to school goals, procedures and policies; staff performance; student services; extracurricular activities; community groups; and communications.

If there is  
no  
resolution,  
appeal to  
the

## ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

To resolve issues related to the performance of building principals; the instructional programs of the district, including curricular offerings, budget, and expenditures.

If there is  
no  
resolution,  
appeal to  
the

## SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

To review issues from other levels; policy amendments and additions; school calendar; community relations; district goal setting and other concerns of a district-wide nature.

If there is  
no  
resolution,  
appeal to  
the

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

To resolve issues that have passed through all other levels.