

## Policy – School Community Relations

### K.2 - Parent/Student Grievance Process

The Board of Directors and Administration of Community Leadership Academy/Victory Preparatory Academy seek to provide the highest quality service to the public and desires to improve wherever service may be deficient. Therefore, the administration invites input from parents and patrons of the school.

The Board of Directors presumes that all staff act in a professional manner and in accordance with the adopted curriculum and instructional strategies. However, the Board recognizes the rights of individuals and groups to present their concerns directly related to the curriculum, instructional materials, instructional strategies, and educational activities in the school. These concerns may be addressed at Open Forum. This policy provides a fair, orderly, and timely process for handling personnel complaints, which will be handled in closed session.

The Board relies first on the teachers and staff to handle the concerns of the public. It is the policy of the Board to provide for resolution at the level most directly involved first and in an informal manner if possible. However, if such resolution cannot be accomplished, a hearing may be requested to discuss this matter. Such a hearing will only be granted if the complainant has followed the procedure set forth in this document.

The Academy trusts, values, and supports its employees and seeks to protect them against unwarranted and unnecessary attacks. Therefore, all formal complaints by members of the public concerning school personnel shall be in writing and bear the signature of the concerned party. Anyone who defames a CLA/VPA employee and damages a person's professional reputation, whether before students or any third party, may be subject to legal action brought by the employee.

#### **Provisions:**

- A. Nothing contained herein shall be construed so as to limit in any way the ability of, or authority for staff and the grievant to resolve any grievance informally.
- B. This grievance procedure shall take precedence over any other formal grievance procedure.
- C. Failure to file or pursue a grievance or appeal, at any step of the procedure, in a timely fashion as specified herein bars any further proceedings to that grievance.
- D. Failure to adhere to published grievance provisions and/or procedures bars any further proceeding to that grievance.

Parents or patrons of the school who wish to express a concern must follow the provision above and the procedure listed below:

1. **Initial Communication:** A member of the public with a concern or complaint about a staff member must first try to resolve the matter directly and informally with the staff member concerned.

2. **Review:** If the matter cannot be resolved informally at the initial level, the concerned party may **submit a written grievance** describing his/her concerns in a clear, specific and detailed manner and submit it to school administration. A written grievance must be submitted within five (5) school days of the act on which the complaint is based. If not so presented, the complaint will not be recognized and shall be considered waived. The administrator shall investigate the facts and communicate with the concerned party and then with the staff person(s) named in the written statement in an effort to facilitate a mutually acceptable resolution. The issue shall be resolved within ten (10) school days from the receipt of the written statement unless the parties involved mutually agree to extend that period. After that time period, the administrator will supply the concerned party with a written result of the investigation.

3. **Appeal:** If the issue has not been resolved to the concerned party's satisfaction, he or she may **submit a written appeal** within five (5) school days to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer may hold a conference of all parties involved within ten (10) school days. The concerned party will receive a written response within ten (10) school days after reviewing the appeal or having the conference.

4. **Appeal to the Board of Directors:** If the issue is still not resolved to the concerned party's satisfaction, he or she may submit a written appeal within five (5) school days to the Board of Directors. The Board has the discretion to accept or reject the Chief Executive Officer's resolution of the issue.

The Board of Directors will give its decision by the next regular meeting (or sooner, if the situation warrants). If the Board rejects the Chief Executive Officer's decision, it will hear the matter at the first regular session. A vote by a simple majority of the Board members shall be required to come to a decision. The matter will be heard in closed session unless the staff member involved requests an open hearing. The Board of Directors will supply the concerned party with a verbal or written result of the investigation.

*If the concerned party is not satisfied with the Board of Director's decision to accept the Chief Executive Officer's resolution or the result of the Board of Director's investigation, the concerned party may submit its concerns in written format to the school's authorizer, the Colorado Charter School Institute, within five (5) business days from receiving the written decision from the Board of Directors. After review, the Institute's Executive Director will publish his/her conclusions in writing within 15 calendar days from receipt of the written concern. The decision of the school's Board of Directors will not be overturned unless there are compelling grounds that the school violated an applicable law, regulation, policy, or contract provision. The Institute can be contacted at (303)866-3299 or [legalandpolicy\\_csi@csi.state.co.us](mailto:legalandpolicy_csi@csi.state.co.us)*

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## **Grievances Against Institute Charter Schools**

The Colorado Charter School Institute (“Institute”) functions as the state authorizer for high-quality charter schools in Colorado. For charter schools authorized by the Institute, the Institute is responsible for ensuring the charter school performs within the guidelines, standards, and laws imposed by the charter contract and state and federal laws and regulations.

Institute charter schools in Colorado are publicly funded and open to all students. Each Institute charter school has an independent governing board that is responsible for the financial, organizational, and academic oversight of the school. Institute charter schools have the freedom to establish their own policies, design their own educational program, and manage their own human and financial resources. The Institute is not involved in operational decision-making such as attendance, grading, staff hiring, and school curriculum so long as they are consistent with any applicable laws, rules, and policies.

**CSI Grievance Policy:** The Institute adheres to the [CSI Grievance Policy](#), and each Institute charter school utilizes a tiered approach for grievances. Generally, the following steps for addressing a grievance should be followed.

1. **Address Issue with Those Directly Involved.** The grievant must first bring the concern to the attention of the individual(s) directly involved.
2. **Address Issue with School Leader.** If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at the lowest possible level, or where the complaint directly involves the school leader, the concern may then be brought to the attention of the school leader.
3. **Prepare a Written Grievance for the Charter School Governing Board.** If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant in Steps 1 and 2, the grievant may file a formal written grievance to the school’s governing board.
4. **Submit a Written Grievance to the Colorado Charter School Institute Executive Director.** If the grievant is not satisfied with the school board’s determination not to review the written grievance or the written resolution reached by the governing board after reviewing the grievance, the grievant may submit the concerns in written format to the Institute within five business days from receiving the written decision of governing board. After review, the Institute’s Executive Director will publish his/her conclusions in writing within 15 calendar days from receipt of the written concern. The decision of the charter school governing board will not be overturned unless there are compelling grounds that the school violated an applicable law, regulation, policy, or contract provision. The Institute can be contacted at (303) 866-3299 or [legalandpolicy\\_csi@csi.state.co.us](mailto:legalandpolicy_csi@csi.state.co.us).

**Parent Grievances:** Parents should refer to the school’s grievance policy in the Parent/Student Handbook to determine the appropriate steps to take to file a complaint. The school’s grievance policy must be followed in its entirety. Should the Institute receive a parent complaint, the Institute will direct the individual to the school’s grievance policy.

**School Employee Grievances:** Institute charter school employees are employees of the school, not the Institute. Institute schools should adopt and implement personnel policies in accordance with state and federal law to address, among other topics, hiring and termination of personnel, terms of employment and compensation. While the Institute is responsible for ensuring that Institute charter schools comply with all applicable employment laws, Institute schools are primarily responsible for compliance with those laws.

Employees (current or past) should refer to the school’s grievance policy in the school’s Employee and/or Parent/Student Handbook to determine the appropriate steps to take to file a complaint. The school’s grievance policy must be followed in its entirety. Should the Institute receive an employee complaint, the Institute will direct the individual to the school’s grievance policy. Individuals should seek the advice of an attorney if they have questions about their employment rights.