

Complaint Procedures for Federal Programs under the ESSA Act

APPENDIX G

COMPLAINTS

Complaint procedures are discussed at the beginning of the school year with school administrators at the leadership meeting. The procedures are shared with them and revised/revisited on a yearly basis. School administrators are charged with sharing the information with their faculty at faculty meetings. The front office at each school has the procedures/forms available for parents who request them and the procedures and forms are also located on the system website and central office front desk for parents to access as needed.

Complaint Procedures

Board policies GAE2 and GAE3 describe the complaint and grievances procedure for certified and non-certified personnel. Parents/school communication is described in student handbooks and on the website. Parents are expected to address complaints or grievances beginning at the school level with the teacher first and then the administration. Central office personnel should be contacted next should parents feel the issues have not been resolved. Conferences forms/notes/minutes are kept on file as documentation of the issues.

Complaint procedures under the ESSA are available from the Director of Federal Programs. The complaint procedures describe grounds for complaints, federal programs for which complaints can be filed, filing and investigation of a complaint, as well as rights to appeal. The address to which complaints should be filed is included in the procedure. Information regarding complaint procedures is distributed annually to school administrators to share with their staff. Copies are kept on file in each school's front office.

Complaint Procedures under ESSA

A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (complainant) may file a complaint with the Hall County Board of Education if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a violation of Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under ESSA has occurred. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

- a. Title I, Part A
- b. Title I, Part C
- c. Title I, Part D
- d. Title II, Part A

- e. Title III, Part A
- f. Title VI, Part B
- g. McKinney-Vento Act
- h. School Improvement 1003(g) SIG
- i. School Improvement 1003(g)—AARA (SIG—AARA)
- j. RT3
- k. Lowest Achieving Schools

C. Complaints Originating at the Local Level

As part of its Assurances within ESSA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 of ESSA, an LEA accepting federal funds must have local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with Hall County Schools to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue with Hall County Schools.

D. Filing a Complaint

A formal complaint must be filed in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

1. A statement that the LEA has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program;
2. The date on which the violation occurred;
3. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation);
4. A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information;
5. Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency;
6. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position; and
7. The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Mrs. Patty Robinson, Director of Early Literacy and School Improvement
Hall County Schools
711 Green Street
Gainesville, GA 30501

E. Investigation of Complaint

Within ten (10) days of receipt of the complaint, Hall County Schools will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

1. The date HCS received the complaint;
2. How the complainant may provide additional information;
3. A statement of the ways in which HCS may investigate or address the complaint; and
4. Any other pertinent information.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the school system will have sixty (60) days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings. If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included. The 60-day timelines may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant.

F. Right of Appeal

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. For complaints filed pursuant to Section 9503 (20 U.S.C. 7883), complaint process for participation of private school children), a complainant may appeal to the Georgia Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the school system's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

Complaint Form for Federal Programs under the ESSA Act**Please print**

Name (Complainant):
Mailing Address:
Phone Number (home): Phone Number (work):
Person/department complaint is being filed against:
The date on which the violation occurred:
Statement that the Hall County School System has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation—attach additional sheets if necessary):
The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (attach additional sheets if necessary):
List the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information. Please attach/enclose copies of all applicable documents supporting your position.

Has a complaint been filed with any other government agency? If so, provide the name of the agency.	
Signature of Complainant:	Date:
Mail or deliver this form to: Mrs. Patty Robinson, Director of Early Literacy and School Improvement Hall County Schools 711 Green Street Gainesville, GA 30501	
Date Received:	
Date of Response to Complainant:	