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# The Equity Handbook

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2008 – 2010

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**Polk County Public Schools**

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# The Equity Handbook

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## 2008 – 2010

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This publication is designed to guide you through the process of filing a complaint of discrimination and harassment in compliance with the Florida Educational Equity Act, Section 1000.05, Florida Statutes and the State Board of Education Rules, 6A-19.001 – 6A-19.010.

The Equity Handbook can also be accessed on the Polk County Schools' website at [www.polk-fl.net](http://www.polk-fl.net). This publication is made available in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole and is online or in your specific school or district department.

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Polk County Public Schools  
Human Resource Services  
1915 South Floral Avenue, Building B  
Bartow, FL 33831

863-534-0513  
863-534-0781

Equity & Compliance Officer  
Customer Service

[www.polk-fl.net](http://www.polk-fl.net)

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# **The Equity Handbook 2008-2010**

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## **Polk County Public Schools**

### **School Board Members**

Frank J. O'Reilly – District 1  
Lori Cunningham – District 2  
Hazel Sellers – District 3  
Brenda C. Reddout, Ph.D. – District 4  
Kay Fields – District 5  
Margaret Lofton – District 6  
Tim Harris – District 7

### **Superintendent of Schools**

Gail F. McKinzie, Ph.D.

### **Assistant Superintendent Human Resource Services**

Ron Ciranna, J.D.

### **Equity and Compliance Officer**

Patricia W. Hunter  
Human Resource Services

The Mission of Polk County Schools:  
To ensure rigorous, relevant learning experiences  
that result in high achievement for our students.

Polk County Schools – An equal opportunity institution for education and employment

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## Introduction to Equity and the Equity Handbook

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The School Board has established policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment of students and employees by another student, employee or anyone doing business with the school district. **The Equity Handbook:**

1. References the equity and nondiscrimination policies for you, your staff, students, and parents.
2. Details the procedures for filing a complaint of discrimination and harassment.
3. Identifies Polk County School administrators designated to address complaints of discrimination and harassment.
4. Identifies state and federal offices that receive discrimination and harassment complaints.

The Equity & Compliance Officer is located in Human Resource Services. The **role of the Equity Officer is to:**

1. Serve as the contact for complaints of discrimination or harassment from employees and students.
2. Assist school administrators and district staff with investigations of discrimination or harassment complaints.
3. Coordinate and monitor the school district's compliance with civil rights requirements.
4. Ensure that the school district's discrimination and harassment policies and complaint procedures are effectively implemented.

School-Based and District Office **Administrators must know and share the following information with the staff members and students under their leadership.**

1. All complaints of discrimination and harassment will be investigated (Board policy).
2. Anyone registering a complaint must be free from retaliation.
3. Training is the key to reducing the number of discrimination and harassment complaints.
4. All complaints of discrimination and harassment (even if resolved at the site where logged) must be shared in summary form with the Equity & Compliance officer for monitoring purposes.
5. All matters pertaining to discrimination and harassment are confidential to the extent permitted by law.
6. If the complaint is determined through investigation to be substantiated, the violator will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to warning, reprimand, suspension or termination subject to applicable procedural requirements in Polk County School Board Policy, which includes the Student Code of Conduct.
7. A paper copy of the Equity Handbook in English, Haitian and Spanish languages is provided to each school and district office. An electronic version of the Equity Handbook in each language is available on the district's website, Quick Links, Equity & Compliance.

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## Prohibition of Discrimination

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The School Board of Polk County, Florida, Policy 6Gx53-1.011

No employee, student, applicant for admission or applicant for employment shall on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, language spoken, homelessness, disability, marital status, age, religion, or any other basis prohibited by law be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination or harassment under any educational programs, activities, services, or in any employment conditions, policies or practices conducted by the Polk County Public Schools.

Initial and continuing notification of this policy and the identification, location, address and telephone number of the Equity & Compliance Officer will be provided to employees, applicants for employment, applicants for admission, students, parents, the general public, and bargaining units by various means which will include weekly new employee orientation sessions, staff and faculty handbooks, equity handbook, district newsletters, postings, publications for employment, and through the Student Code of Conduct.

All discrimination and harassment complaints filed should be forwarded to the district's Equity & Compliance Officer at the following address:

Patricia W. Hunter  
Equity & Compliance Officer  
Human Resource Services  
1915 South Floral Avenue  
Post Office Box 391  
Bartow, FL 33831  
**Telephone: 863-534-0513**  
**Fax: 863-534-0737**  
**E-mail: [patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net](mailto:patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net)**

**NOTE: To help make the complaint process easy for employees and students, the Equity Contacts, whose names follow, as well as the **school principals** can also receive discrimination and harassment complaints. **Anyone receiving complaints will forward a written copy of the complaint to the district's Equity & Compliance Officer, Human Resource Services.****

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## Equity Contacts

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**Complaints regarding Title II—Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title IX—Sex Discrimination in Education Programs, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Florida Educational Equity Act, Section 1000.05, Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules 6A-19.001 – 6A-19.010, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues:**

- Patricia W. Hunter  
Equity & Compliance Officer  
Human Resource Services  
1915 South Floral Avenue  
Bartow, FL 33831  
Telephone: 863-534-0513  
[Patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net](mailto:Patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net)

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:**

- Norma Hayes  
Exceptional Student Education  
Bartow Municipal Airport #270  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Telephone: 863-534-0930  
[Norma.hayes@polk-fl.net](mailto:Norma.hayes@polk-fl.net)

**Complaints or concerns by students related to equity and access in education programs:**

- Linda Troupe  
Student Services  
Bartow Municipal Airport #270  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Telephone: 863-534-0928  
[Linda.troupe@polk-fl.net](mailto:Linda.troupe@polk-fl.net)

Applicants for Admission to:

**Magnet/Choice/Charter Schools:**

- Carolyn Finch  
School Choice  
1915 South Floral Avenue  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Telephone: 863-534-0631  
[Carolyn.finch@polk-fl.net](mailto:Carolyn.finch@polk-fl.net)

**Career Centers:**

- Kenneth Lloyd  
Traviss Career Center  
3225 Winter Lake Road  
Lakeland, FL 33803  
Telephone: 863-499-2700  
[Kenneth.lloyd@polk-fl.net](mailto:Kenneth.lloyd@polk-fl.net)

Lisa Harden  
Ridge Career Center  
7700 State Road 544  
Winter Haven, FL 33881  
Telephone: 863-419-3060  
[Lisa.harden@polk-fl.net](mailto:Lisa.harden@polk-fl.net)

Grievances/Complaints (union matters) related to employment:

**Employees:**

- José Farinas  
Employee Relations  
Human Resource Services  
1915 South Floral Avenue  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Telephone: 863-534-0731  
[José.farinas@polk-fl.net](mailto:José.farinas@polk-fl.net)

**Applicants for Employment:**

- Ron Ciranna, J.D.  
Assistant Superintendent  
Human Resource Services  
1915 South Floral Avenue  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Telephone: 863-534-0729  
[Ron.ciranna@polk-fl.net](mailto:Ron.ciranna@polk-fl.net)

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## Other Resources

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- **The Florida Commission on Human Relations**  
2009 Apalachee Parkway, Suite 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
Telephone: 800-342-8170 or 850-488-7082
- **Florida Education Standards Commission (ESC)**  
Florida Department of Education  
Turlington Building, Suite 224  
325 West Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400  
Telephone: 850-245-0441
- **Office of Equity and Access**  
Florida Department of Education  
Turlington Building, Suite 1446  
325 West Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400  
Telephone: 850-845-0511
- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**  
Tampa Field Office (includes Polk County)  
501 East Polk Street  
10 th Floor  
Tampa, FL 33602  
Telephone: 813-228-2310
- **U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**  
Miami District Office  
1 Biscayne Tower, Suite 2700  
2 South Biscayne Boulevard  
Miami, FL 33131-1805  
Telephone: 305-536-4491
- **Office for Civil Rights**  
U. S. Department of Education  
61 Forsyth Street S.W., Suite 19T70  
Atlanta, GA 30303-3104  
Telephone: 404-562-6350  
TDD: 404-331-7236  
E-mail: [OCR\\_Atlanta@ed.gov](mailto:OCR_Atlanta@ed.gov)
- **Office for Civil Rights**  
U. S. Department of Education  
Customer Service Team  
550 – 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-1100  
Telephone: 800-421-3481  
FAX: 202-245-6840; TTD: 877-521-2172; E-mail: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

For assistance related to the **Office for Civil Rights (OCR)**, contact the enforcement offices if you wish to file a complaint (or use online complaint form) or if you need technical assistance on a problem or assistance to prevent civil rights problems or if you have a question on national policy. To make a Freedom of Information request for information that is national in scope, or to request publications or other assistance that is not available online, use the OCR website address at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov). The online complaint form can be accessed at [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html).

Due to recent changes in mail processing, delivery and handling times have increased. Students and parents, representatives of education institutions, and other OCR customers are encouraged to contact OCR by using e-mail or fax to communicate when possible. For those without current e-mail accounts, Internet access may be freely available from your local public library, and free e-mail accounts are available from several large providers. Fax numbers and e-mail addresses for each OCR office are provided above.

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# Educational Equity Harassment Policy

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The School Board of Polk County, Florida, Policy 6Gx53-1.006

## I. DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

### A. Stated Policy.

The School Board of Polk County, Florida, forbids and affirmatively commits to preventing discrimination or harassment against any person, including employee, applicant for employment or student, on the basis of sex, race, national origin, language spoken, color, marital status, homelessness, or disability or other basis prohibited by law. All persons involved in any activity of the School Board have the right to an environment free from discrimination and harassment. The Board will not tolerate sexual, racial, disability harassment activity by any of its employees or students, or non-employee volunteers who work under the control of school authorities.

### B. Rationale.

Incidents of impermissible discrimination or harassment either tolerated or committed by School Board employees, students or anyone participating in a School Board activity threatens the safety, security and well-being of not only those against whom such actions are directed, but everyone who has an interest in our schools. Such actions create the wholly unacceptable impression that our school system neither accepts nor requires compliance with the concepts of equal opportunity and treatment under the law. For these reasons, the School Board has adopted this policy as its strident commitment to requiring and insuring that all School Board activities will take place without harassment or impermissible discrimination being directed against any person.

### C. Application.

In recognition of the emphasis placed on this policy by the School Board, any substantiated violation of this policy will be deemed a serious violation and shall be addressed accordingly. All administrators, managers and supervisors are expected and required to insure that this policy is fully implemented and vigorously enforced.

## II. DEFINITIONS

A. **Discrimination** is conduct which deprives the victim of the proper opportunity to participate in employment, educational programs or activities, School Board or school sponsored activities, or in any other activities offered or provided by the School Board on account of race, color, national origin, language spoken, homelessness, sex, disability, marital status, age, religion, or any other basis prohibited by law.

B. **Harassment** is conduct directed by a person or persons against another person on account of race, color, national origin, language spoken, homelessness, sex, disability, marital status, age, religion, or any other basis prohibited by law which is severe, persistent, pervasive, and objectively offensive to the point that the prohibited conduct substantially impairs the victim's participation in his/her employment, educational programs, school sponsored activities, or any other

activities offered or provided by the School District, as more specifically defined on the following pages.

- C. **Sexual harassment** consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment, an individual's education or participation in any School Board function.
  2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for an employment or academic decision affecting that individual.
  3. Such conduct substantially interferes with an employee's work performance or student's academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or school environment.
  4. Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include, but is not limited to, the following:
    - a. Verbal, nonverbal, graphic, and written harassment or abuse
    - b. Pressure for sexual activity
    - c. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications
    - d. Unwelcome or inappropriate touching
    - e. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's employment.
  5. It is sexual harassment for a School Board employee or non-employee volunteer to use his or her authority to solicit sexual favors or attention from subordinates or students, including but not limited to incidents when the subordinate's or student's failure to submit will result in adverse treatment, or when the subordinate's or student's acquiescence will result in preferential treatment.
- D. **Racial harassment** consists of verbal, nonverbal, graphic, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward any person based upon race when such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating hostile or offensive work or school environment; or when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or any school activity.

Examples of racial harassment include, **but are not limited to** the following conduct which is based upon race:

1. Epithets and slurs
2. Negative stereotyping
3. Threatening, intimidating or hostile acts
4. Written or graphic material that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual group
5. It is racial harassment for a School Board employee, non-employee volunteer or student to create or be responsible for a racially hostile environment—i.e. harassing conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so far as to interfere with or limit the ability of an employee or student to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges provided by the District.

- E. **Disability harassment** is oral, written, graphic or physical conduct or any act as relating to an individual's disability that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to limit or interfere with the ability of the individual to participate in or benefit from district programs or activities; harassment that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or school environment.

Examples of disability harassment include, **but are not limited to** conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition such as:

1. Imitating manner of speech
2. Interfering with necessary equipment
3. Negative stereotyping
4. Threatening, intimidating or hostile acts
5. Written or graphic material that shows an aversion or hostility towards an individual or group with disabling attributes.
6. It is disability harassment when a School Board employee, non-employee volunteer or student seeks to involve a student or employee with a disability in antisocial, dangerous or criminal activity where the student or employee because of disability, is unable to comprehend fully or consent to the behavior.

### III. PROCEDURES

Any person who alleges a violation of the foregoing policy may file a complaint as set forth below.

- A. **Employees.** Any person who alleges harassment or discrimination by any staff member may use the Educational Equity Complaint Procedure or may complain directly to the building principal or Equity and Compliance officer. If the direct administrator or supervisor is the offending person, the report should be made to the next higher level of administration or supervision or the Equity and Compliance officer.

- Equity Handbook: English, Spanish, Haitian-Creole
- Equity Complaint Form
- Complaints filed should be forwarded to:

Patricia W. Hunter Equity & Compliance Human Resource Services Polk County Public Schools 1915 South Floral Avenue P. O. Box 391 Bartow, FL 33831 Telephone: 863-534-0513      Fax: 863-534-0737 E-mail: <a href="mailto:patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net">patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net</a>
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- B. **Students.** Any student who alleges harassment or discrimination by another student, employee, or non-employee volunteer may use the student complaint procedure as found in the Code of Conduct or may complain directly to the building principal or Equity and Compliance officer.
- C. **Non-Retaliation.** Filing a complaint or otherwise reporting harassment or discrimination will not affect the individual's status, future employment, future promotion, extracurricular activities or work assignments. Retaliation against any

individual for good faith reporting of a claim or harassment or cooperation in an investigation will not be tolerated and will itself be subject to appropriate discipline.

- D. **Confidentiality.** The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the respondent, will be respected, consistent with the Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.
  
- E. **Determination.** In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment or discrimination, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated. The Superintendent or designee has the responsibility of investigating and resolving complaints of harassment or discrimination.
  
- F. **Substantiated Charge.**
  - 1. Employees. A substantiated charge against a School Board employee shall be deemed a serious disciplinary matter and shall subject such employee to disciplinary action, including but not limited to warning, reprimand, suspension or termination, subject to applicable procedural requirements.
  - 2. Students. A substantiated charge against a student shall be deemed a serious disciplinary matter and shall subject that student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.
  - 3. Other Parties. Anyone involved in a School Board activity, other than employees and students, who engages in an act in violation of this policy shall be subject to prompt response by the appropriate School Board officials, including without limitation, immediate removal and future exclusion from such School Board activities.
  
- G. **Training.** Training for staff and students shall be required each year to insure that the entire education community understands what harassment is and the consequences for it.

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## Student Complaint Procedure

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### Step 1.

The person filing the complaint (called the complainant) has sixty (60) days from the date of the incident for the initial filing of the complaint.

### Step 2.

The complaint shall be filed in writing using the Equity Complaint Form (see p. 15 of this Handbook) bearing the signature of the complainant.

- a. Complaints may, under extenuating circumstances, be made orally. If the complaint is made orally, the Equity & Compliance officer shall record it in written form, which shall be reviewed and signed by the complainant to verify its accuracy.
- b. A complaint may be amended to correct technical defects, omissions, or to clarify or amplify allegations made therein. An amendment may be filed at any time before the investigation is completed.
- c. The complainant may withdraw a complaint at any time.
- d. The District, regardless of whether a complaint conforms to a certain format or whether or not it is committed to writing, will investigate all complaints of discrimination or harassment.

### Step 3.

Upon receipt of the complaint of discrimination or harassment, by the principal, supervisor or superintendent's designee, written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint shall be forwarded to the complainant within five (5) working days.

### Step 4.

Within five (5) working days after acknowledging receipt of the complaint, the investigator will interview the complainant to obtain any additional information needed to clarify the complaint.

### Step 5.

When the complaint is received, the person accused (called the respondent) shall be advised of the existence of the receipt of the complaint, provided with a copy of the complaint, and advised that any interference in the investigation or any retaliation against the complainant will subject the respondent to disciplinary action.

- a. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint. Such response shall be made to the investigator either orally or in writing.
- b. Oral responses shall be immediately recorded by the investigator and signed by the respondent to verify its accuracy.

### Step 6.

The Equity & Compliance officer, at this point, may inquire of the complainant as to a possible resolution of the complaint.

- a. If the complainant is agreeable to a resolution of the complaint prior to implementation of investigation, the Equity & Compliance officer shall begin discussion regarding a resolution.
- b. If an acceptable resolution cannot be reached within thirty (30) calendar days, the complaint shall be further investigated.

**Step 7.**

If the investigation proceeds further, within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the initial complaint, the investigation shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Investigating all allegations by the complainant and respondent,
- b. Interviewing any witnesses, including co-workers and supervisors,
- c. Taking statements from witnesses and other persons who may be able to provide valid and relevant information.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall provide a final written disposition of the complaint containing a summary of findings, and an analysis and conclusion to the complainant and respondent.

**Step 8.**

The complainant may request a review from an appropriate alternate of the final disposition from the Equity & Compliance officer by notifying the Superintendent within five (5) working days after receiving the final disposition.

**Step 9.**

Within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the complainant's request for review, the alternate shall render a written decision to the complainant and the respondent either to dismiss the complaint or to initiate corrective action.

**Step 10.**

A substantiated charge (a charge found to be true) against a School Board employee shall subject such employee to disciplinary action subject to applicable procedural requirements, including but not limited to:

- a. warning,
- b. suspension, or
- c. termination.

**Step 11.**

A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the **Code of Student Conduct**.

**Step 12.**

Retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or against an individual providing information regarding such a complaint is prohibited.

**Step 13.**

The use of this complaint procedure shall not prohibit the complainant from seeking redress from other available state and/or federal sources.

**Step 14.**

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the respondent, will be respected, consistent with the School Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

NOTE: The Equity Complaint Form can be printed from page 15 of this Handbook.

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# Employee Complaint Procedure

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## **Step 1.**

The person filing the complaint (called the complainant) has sixty (60) days from the date of the incident for the initial filing of the complaint.

## **Step 2.**

The complaint shall be filed in writing using the Equity Complaint Form (see p. 15 of this Handbook) bearing the signature of the complainant.

- a. Complaints may, under extenuating circumstances, be made orally. If the complaint is made orally, the Equity & Compliance officer shall record it in written form, which shall be reviewed and signed by the complainant to verify its accuracy.
- b. A complaint may be amended to correct technical defects, omissions, or to clarify or amplify allegations made therein. An amendment may be filed at any time before the investigation is completed.
- c. The complainant may withdraw a complaint at any time.
- d. The District, regardless of whether a complaint conforms to a certain format or whether or not it is committed to writing, will investigate all complaints of discrimination or harassment.

## **Step 3.**

Upon receipt of the complaint of discrimination or harassment, by the principal, supervisor or superintendent's designee, written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint shall be forwarded to the complainant within five (5) working days.

## **Step 4.**

Within five (5) working days after acknowledging receipt of the complaint, the investigator will interview the complainant to obtain any additional information needed to clarify the complaint.

## **Step 5.**

When the complaint is received, the person accused (called the respondent) shall be advised of the existence of the receipt of the complaint, provided with a copy of the complaint, and advised that any interference in the investigation or any retaliation against the complainant will subject the respondent to disciplinary action.

- a. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint. Such response shall be made to the investigator either orally or in writing.
- b. Oral responses shall be immediately recorded by the investigator and signed by the respondent to verify its accuracy.

## **Step 6.**

The Equity & Compliance officer, at this point, may inquire of the complainant as to a possible resolution of the complaint.

- a. If the complainant is agreeable to a resolution of the complaint prior to implementation of investigation, the Equity & Compliance officer shall begin discussion regarding a resolution.
- b. If an acceptable resolution cannot be reached within thirty (30) calendar days, the complaint shall be further investigated.

**Step 7.**

If the investigation proceeds further, within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the initial complaint, the investigation shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Investigating all allegations by the complainant and respondent,
- b. Interviewing any witnesses, including co-workers and supervisors,
- c. Taking statements from witnesses and other persons who may be able to provide valid and relevant information.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall provide a final written disposition of the complaint containing a summary of findings, and an analysis and conclusion to the complainant and respondent.

**Step 8.**

The complainant may request a review from an appropriate alternate of the final disposition from the Equity & Compliance officer by notifying the Superintendent within five (5) working days after receiving the final disposition.

**Step 9.**

Within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the complainant's request for review, the alternate shall render a written decision to the complainant and the respondent either to dismiss the complaint or to initiate corrective action.

**Step 10.**

A substantiated charge (a charge found to be true) against a School Board employee shall subject such employee to disciplinary action subject to applicable procedural requirements, including but not limited to:

- a. warning,
- b. suspension, or
- c. termination.

**Step 11.**

A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject that employee to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the School Board Policy.

**Step 12.**

Retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or against an individual providing information regarding such a complaint is prohibited.

**Step 13.**

The use of this complaint procedure shall not prohibit the complainant from seeking redress from other available state and/or federal sources.

**Step 14.**

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the respondent, will be respected, consistent with the School Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred. The District must discharge its duty to prevent and correct discrimination and harassment.

NOTE: The Equity Complaint Form can be printed from page 15 of this Handbook.

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# Polk County Public Schools

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## Equity Complaint Form

(To be completed by the person who if filing the complaint)

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Name of Official receiving this complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Filed: \_\_\_\_\_ School/Department involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ I am a(n):  Student  Employee

Complainant's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date alleged violation occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

From who have you sought assistance with this complaint? \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly explain complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses?  Yes  No If yes, give name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of witness statement enclosed?  Yes  No

Resolution sought: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

To be completed by Principal/Administrator/Equity & Compliance Officer: How was this case resolved?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Send Copy of this Complaint Form to:**

Patricia W. Hunter  
Equity & Compliance Officer  
1915 South Floral Avenue  
P. O. Box 391  
Bartow, FL 33831  
Telephone: 863-534-0513 Fax: 863-534-0737  
E-mail: [patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net](mailto:patricia.hunter@polk-fl.net)