

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School
Policy S7: Anti-Discrimination and Student Complaints
Adopted: September 17, 2020

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices, student programs and dealings with the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations.

Any employee, student, applicant for employment, parent or other person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy must make a complaint to the individuals identified below:

Title VI Coordinator: Ginger Almon

Title IX Coordinator: Ginger Almon

Section 504 Coordinator: Natalie Zajac

ADA Coordinator: Natalie Zajac

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints made to the School System regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin in violation of Title VI, or on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans With Disabilities Act will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other person with a complaint alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the school leader for his/her school or the appropriate coordinator designated from time to time by the Board of Education. If the complaint is oral, either the coordinator or school leader to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement

if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to the school leader, he or she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator of the complaint.

2. If the alleged offending individual is the coordinator designated by the Board of Directors, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the School Leader or, if the complaint is initially made to the school leader, reported by the Chairman of the Board.
3. The coordinator or his or her designee shall have fifteen work days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The coordinator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate coordinator and the School Leader or his or her designee.
4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five work days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the School Leader. If the alleged offending individual is the School Leader, the Complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Directors, rather than the School Leader.
5. The School Leader shall have fifteen work days to review the complaint and the response of the coordinator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The School Leader shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended by the coordinator or designee or the action to be taken by the system in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the coordinator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.
6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the School Leader, then the complainant shall have the right, within fifteen work days of the receipt of the written response of the School Leader, to have the complaint referred to the Board of Directors. In order to have the Board review the School Leader decision, the complainant must file with the School Leader a

written statement setting forth the reasons he or she disagrees with the response of the Superintendent and the action the complainant is requesting the system to take. The complainant shall also include in the written response a request that his or her complaint be referred to the Board of Directors.

7. Within thirty work days of receipt of the written request of the complainant, the School Leader shall present the matter to the Board of Directors at its regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The Board shall review the original complaint, the response of the coordinator or designee, the response of the School Leader, and the response of the complainant. In addition, the Board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
8. The Board of Directors will either uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent or require the system to take some other action in response to the complaint. A copy of the action of the Board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the Board of Directors or as a separate written statement. The Board shall be the final reviewing authority within the system. Further,
9. This policy is not intended to deprive any employee of any right they may have to file a grievance. This policy is not intended to provide an alternative process for resolving evaluation and employment disputes where there already exists a procedure or policy. The complainant retains at all times the right to contact the Office of Civil Rights or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission with regard to any allegations that the system has violated the statutes described above.
10. The school shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to students, applicants for employment and employees through appropriate procedures.
11. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.
12. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible, shall be

protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.