



# Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

**Title of board policy being reviewed:**

JFH-Student Complaints

**Describe the purpose of this policy:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a structured process for students to raise and resolve concerns, ensuring access to fair, timely, and orderly complaint resolution. It provides a progression from informal resolution to formal appeals, including access to district leadership and the Board.

**What is your experience with this policy:**

Student complaint processes are essential for ensuring accountability and student voice. Their effectiveness depends on accessibility, trust, and support systems that enable all students—especially those from marginalized groups—to safely and confidently raise concerns.



**What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families?  
What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students  
and their families?**

**Is this policy:**

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

This policy will be communicated to staff through inclusion in the student and employee handbook. The policy will also be posted on the district website for easy access.



Clear and easy to understand?

Yes. The policy clearly outlines a step-based process for resolving complaints, beginning with informal conversations and progressing to formal appeals. However, additional guidance may be needed to ensure students understand how to navigate the process.

## People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

The policy positively supports student voice and access to resolution processes. It provides multiple levels of review and reinforces fairness and due process.

Potential barriers may include students' lack of familiarity with formal processes, fear of retaliation, or limited access to support when navigating appeals. The emphasis on informal resolution may unintentionally disadvantage students who feel uncomfortable raising concerns directly.

The policy reduces barriers by creating a formal pathway for concerns to be heard and addressed.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

Students from historically marginalized groups—including students of color, multilingual students, and students with disabilities—may be less likely to utilize complaint processes due to power dynamics, trust concerns, or communication barriers.

If not supported equitably, these students may experience reduced access to resolution. Monitoring complaint data by demographic groups can help identify disparities in access or outcomes.



Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

The policy indicates that staff and students will be involved in establishing procedures, which supports inclusive development. Ongoing evaluation should include student feedback, particularly from underrepresented groups, to ensure accessibility and effectiveness.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates a commitment to fairness, due process, and orderly resolution of concerns. It emphasizes timely problem-solving and access to decision-makers at multiple levels.

It also reflects a priority on resolving issues at the lowest level possible while maintaining formal escalation pathways.

## Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The policy creates an environment that values structured conflict resolution and accountability. However, reliance on informal resolution may create barriers for students who feel less empowered to advocate for themselves.

Barriers to equitable outcomes include power imbalances, fear of retaliation, lack of awareness of rights, language barriers, and limited access to advocacy support.



## Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy provides students with access to multiple levels of decision-making, including the Superintendent and Board, which supports power-sharing.

This can be strengthened by ensuring students understand their rights, have access to support, and can engage in the process without fear or confusion.

## Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy has the potential to improve equity by providing formal avenues for student concerns. However, disparities may persist if some students are less able or willing to access the process.

Unintended consequences may include underreporting of issues, particularly among marginalized students, or overreliance on informal resolution where power dynamics are unequal.



## Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Negative impacts can be reduced by:

- Providing clear, student-friendly and multilingual guidance on the complaint process.
- Ensuring access to trusted adults or advocates to support students.
- Training staff on equitable and non-retaliatory response practices.
- Monitoring complaint access and outcomes for disparities.
- Creating safe, confidential reporting options.