



**Dispute Resolution
Governance Council Policy #2008.1
(Replaces Conflict Resolution Policy #2007.1)**

DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY

In an attempt to resolve disputes within the school in an effective and respectful manner, all disputes within the school (between staff members, students, parents/guardians, or on-site contractors) must follow this Dispute Resolution Policy.

Golden Eagle Charter School will only be involved in a dispute if there is a school policy or procedure that has allegedly been violated. Personal disputes should be resolved between the parties directly, and are not the responsibility of the school to address. In order to engage the GECS Dispute Resolution Policy, the incident must involve an alleged violation of school policy or procedure. Any such disputes among staff, parents/guardians, on-site contractors or students will be subject to the following steps:

1. Before addressing the dispute, all parties involved should observe a cooling-down period, of at least one day, in order to gain perspective on the issue. Disputes can be resolved more efficiently when the participants have gotten out of the reactionary mode that accompanies strong feelings.
2. The complainant will try to work out the problem face-to-face with the other party or parties involved, even if this is awkward or uncomfortable. All parties should strive to be responsible and accountable for their actions.
3. If the dispute cannot be resolved through direct discussion between the parties, the complainant will ask a staff member to informally mediate the dispute. The staff mediator should meet with both parties and attempt to resolve the dispute. No documentation is required.
4. If the person did not receive an acceptable outcome in step 3, he/she should submit a written complaint to the school's Director or designee.

The complaint must be filed within 20 business days of the original incident and should reference the school policy or procedure which was allegedly violated and a summary of the steps taken to resolve the dispute thus far. It should also include the desired outcomes the person hopes to achieve by filing the written complaint. All parties involved will be given a copy of the written complaint and have 5 business days to respond in writing, including his/her desired outcomes. The complaint will be investigated by the Director or designee. Within ten business days the Director or designee will attempt to resolve the dispute and submit a written response to all the parties involved.

5. If the complainant did not receive an acceptable outcome in step 4, he/she should submit, within five business days, a written summary, to the Director or designee, of all the steps attempted so far and why the previous resolution solutions are not acceptable. The original desired outcomes are the only outcomes that can be addressed.

If the person believes that mediation from an outside party will benefit the situation and could lead to solving the dispute, he/she could request a 2-hour mediation session. Mediation will be held if both parties and the school's Director or designee agree. The mediator will be an outside person hired by GECS. The focus of the mediation will only be on the original complaint and original desired outcomes containing an alleged violation of the school's policies or procedures. It is not the responsibility of GECS to mediate personal dispute. A form will be filed by the mediator documenting the results of mediation including whether the dispute has been resolved or more action is needed.

6. If mediation is not appropriate or if mediation was not deemed successful, the complaint will be forwarded to the school's Governance Council. The Governance Council will hear from all parties, in writing or in person involved in the dispute. The dispute hearing will be held in open session unless an employee's job performance is in question. The Governance Council will then determine what action is necessary to resolve the dispute. The decision of the Governance Council is binding on all parties.