Communicating Concerns at Your School and District

A Family Guide
Parents for Public Schools (PPS), District PTA (PTA) and the BOE Parent Advisory Council (PAC) worked together for over a year to map out the process of voicing a concern and bringing it to resolution.

The Toolkit was developed in direct response to requests for assistance from families in need to all three of these parent-led groups.

SFUSD embraced this effort and supported it’s launch and use in district operations.
Tools included

* Flowchart
* Office of Family Voice Parent Concern Documentation form
* Documentation Log
Level 1: Seeking resolution at the SCHOOL LEVEL

It is best to start at the school level.

When the concern or complaint involves the school itself, going directly to the source can offer the most immediate opportunity for resolution and/or greater understanding.

When the concern is not related to the school site, but with the district itself, discussing this with district staff at the school may offer an explanation that resolves the issue immediately or helps the parent decide if the issue or concern should be pursued further with the Office of Family Voice (see Level 2.)

If Resolution is not achieved at this level, Move to Level 2.
Level 2: Seeking resolution from The Office of Family Voice

Parent contacts the Office of Family Voice (241-6150) to communicate issue or concern and provides details and documentation (if possible) about what occurred at Level 1.

OFV records concern and contacts principal or district office and attempts to resolve issue or gain information that will assist in follow-up conversation with parent.

OFV or school principal contacts parent to attempt to resolve issue. If the school principal contacts parent, OFV will conduct a follow-up conversation with the parent to determine if the issue was resolved or requires further action (Level 3).

If resolution has not been achieved at Level 1, then parents should take concerns to Level 2 by contacting the Office of Family Voice (OFV) at 241-6150.

The Office of Family Voice was created in 2009 as resource for parents to contact to request information or guidance on any issue or to report an issue or concern.

The Office of Family Voice reports directly to SFUSD’s Office of Parent Engagement and Advocacy.

If Resolution is not achieved at this level, Move to Level 3
The Leadership, Equity, Achievement and Design (LEAD) Office is comprised of the team of Asst. Supts. (and their support staff) who directly supervise, guide and monitor the operations of each school.

If resolution has not been achieved at Level 2 and the parent requests further action, the OFV will take the concern to the Asst. Supt. (or Exec. Dir.) who supervises the school involved.

The Asst. Supt. (or designee), after consultation with both the school administration and the parent, will assess the appropriate next course of action and if resolution can be achieved.

If Resolution is not achieved at this level, Move to Level 4.
At the conclusion of Level 3, the parent communicates to the LEAD Office that they are requesting a conversation with the Deputy Superintendent who supervises the LEAD Office.

LEAD Office Asst. Supt. (or designee) explains the situation and why attempts to resolve the issue were unsuccessful and communicates the request for the Deputy to personally contact the parent.

Deputy Supt. contacts parent to provide the opportunity for the parent to communicate the concern and why they remain dissatisfied with the prior actions of district staff.

If resolution is not achieved at Level 3, and the parent communicates that they remain extremely dissatisfied with the status of the issue, the parent can communicate to the Asst. Supt. or representative of the LEAD Office that they request contact from the Deputy Superintendent who supervises the LEAD Office.

At this level, the parent has the opportunity to express their concern and why they remain dissatisfied with the response from district staff.

The Deputy Supt. will hear the concern and assess whether or not further investigation or discussion with district staff is necessary or if the response of staff, though not the response that was desired by the parent, was appropriate and, regrettably, resolution cannot be achieved with this issue.
**Parent Concern documentation form**

**Office of Family Voice**  
Ramon Martinez Flores  
Family Engagement and Advocacy Coordinator martinezr@sfusd.edu  
555 Franklin St. San Francisco, CA 94102  
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Name of Student(s):  
1.  
2.  
DOB: (MM/DD/YY)

Attending School(s): 1.  
Grade: (circle one or more if needed)  
Pre-k  K  1st  2nd  3rd  4th  5th  6th  7th  8th  9th  10th  11th  12th

Parent or Guardian’s Name:  
Phone Number: ( )  
Email:

**OPTIONAL Information:**  
Mixed or Other  
African American  
American Indian  
Asian  
Arabic  
Choctaw  
Chinese  
Cambodian  
Filipino  
Hispanic or Latino  
Korean  
Japanese  
Cambodian  
Korean  
Vietnamese  
Other Asian  
Other: __________

Please read instructions on reverse of this form and attach any additional information as needed.  
**Description of concern:**

Type of concern:  
- Academics  
- Bullying  
- Discrimination  
- District/School Policy  
- Expulsion  
- Health  
- Safety  
- Special Education  
- Transfer requests  
- Transportation  
- Truancy  
- Other: __________

Persons Involved:  
- Administration (Principal)  
- Vice Principal  
- Teacher  
- Para Professional  
- Parent Liaison  
- Secretary  
- Student Advisor  
- Security Guard  
- Crossing Guard  
- Counselor  
- Custodian  
- Cafeteria Staff  
- Bus Driver  
- Other: __________

Describe your desired solution:

**OFFICE USE ONLY**  
- Active  
- Reopen  
- Under investigation  
- Inconclusive  
- Closed

Concern was Received:  
- Walked in  
- Email  
- Phone  
- School mail  
Other: __________

ACTION TAKEN:  
DATE: ________
Writing effective complaints:

* Start with what you know (What you saw, heard, or said)
* Use dates and times
* Describe the steps you took to correct the problem
* List the witnesses (if any)
* Identify the rule of conduct or policy violation
* Describe your desired solution
Documentation

It is important to keep a log of any interactions and responses from your school and/or district.

- What type of interaction did you have (phone, in person meeting, email)?
- What day and time did the interaction occur?
- Who was included in the interaction? (Teacher, principal, other staff members or other adults)
- What, if any, documentation was submitted? (Police record, photograph, doctor’s note, etc.)
- WHO WAS THE DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED TO?
- What action were you told would be taken, and within what time frame?
- What actually happened and when did it happen?
- What are the next steps you need to take?
# Staying Organized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and time of interaction</th>
<th>Type of Interaction (phone, in person meeting, email, note)</th>
<th>People included in interaction (include contact information)</th>
<th>Documentation submitted (yes or no and what type)</th>
<th>Outcome (what will happen within what amount of time)</th>
<th>Follow up (what are next steps?)</th>
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How to get started

Ramon Martinez

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Phone 241-6150
Cell 793-3298
Fax 241-6149
Visit OFV on the web
Detailed information

Office of Family Voice
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Coordinator: Ramon Martinez
Email: martinez@sfusd.edu
Office: (415) 241-0150
Cell phone: (415) 785-3298
Fax: (415) 241-8149

Se Habla Español

The Office of Family Voice was created to promote our accountability to families, as emphasized in the District’s Beyond the Talk strategic plan. We are here to help you voice concerns about your children’s education in our schools. We will help you resolve conflicts with schools, as well as follow up with you to determine how effective we were and how your goals were met.

The Office of Family Voice reports directly to the Executive Director of the Office of Schools/Family Partnership.

Please contact us to:
- Report a concern about an incident at a school.
- Request an investigation or file a formal complaint.
- Provide feedback about a specific school’s program and/or leadership.
- Report a concern about any district policy or procedure (i.e. placements, transfers, graduation requirements, A-G policy, budget allocations, etc.)
- Inquire about district procedures for disciplinary actions (i.e. suspensions, expulsions, etc.)
- Ask for a conversation with the Assistant Superintendent who supervises the school’s principal.

All of our schools have a plan of action to ensure that your children thrive in a safe environment, and most problems can be resolved on site.

SFUSD’s Program “Mentoring for Success” Providing Key Support for Struggling Teens

Mentors, tasked by quality mentoring programs, play a powerful role in preventing substance abuse and youth violence, as well as boosting academic achievement and workforce readiness. In several San Francisco’s public schools, mentors are working with at-risk students through Mentoring for Success... Read more
Thank you for attending