

## IDEA Florida, Inc., Grievance Policy

This policy applies to employees of IDEA Florida Inc. (“IDEA”). IDEA values every employee. Employees shall have the ability to bring concerns about actions that may violate applicable law or IDEA policies through appropriate informal and formal processes, as set forth below.

### **Freedom from Retaliation**

Neither IDEA nor any of its employees shall unlawfully retaliate against an employee for raising a concern or complaint in good faith. However, if an employee makes a complaint in bad faith, or knowing or having reason to know that material allegations are false untrue or unsupportable, such complaints may be grounds for discipline.

## Grievance Process & Procedures

### **Purpose**

The purpose of IDEA’s employee grievance process is to efficiently and effectively resolve employee complaints and workplace conflicts at the lowest possible administrative level. All participants are expected to remain courteous and must also adhere to the relevant Florida, code of ethics while using and applying this policy.

### **Informal Process**

Employees are encouraged to express their concerns through informal discussions with their supervisors, the principal, or, if the supervisor or principal is accused of a violation related to the grievance, another administrator who has the authority to address the issue within the chain of command. Concerns should be promptly shared to facilitate a prompt resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. While informal resolution is encouraged, it will not extend any deadlines in this grievance process, except by mutual written agreement of IDEA and the employee.

### **Formal Process**

An employee shall initiate a formal grievance by timely filing a written grievance form (<https://forms.office.com/r/3xdGZmGZPB>) . The Grievance Form shall require:

- Specific incident description
- Date of occurrence
- Witnesses (if applicable)
- Identification of law or policy believed to have been violated

- Desired resolution or requested relief
- Supporting documentation and evidence

Any grievance that raises a claim of bullying, unlawful harassment, or discrimination, or unlawful retaliation for complaining about bullying, unlawful harassment or discrimination, shall be referred to and addressed by Human Resources for appropriate investigation and handling, and shall not be processed further as part of the otherwise applicable normal grievance process. Human Resources shall typically notify the employee within 3 business days of filing whether the grievance is to be treated as a normal grievance or otherwise handled by Human Resources as described above. Human Resources may extend the time for making this determination as administratively necessary, but without undue delay.

All other grievances, other than those above specified, will follow the normal grievance process. An employee may withdraw a normal grievance at any time prior to a written resolution.

## Filing

Grievance forms and appeal notices may be submitted by hand delivery to any supervisor or administrator or via email. Emails should be sent to [ipsgrievance@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:ipsgrievance@ideapublicschools.org). Hand-delivered filings will be considered timely if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted electronically will be deemed timely if received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date and time shown on the electronic communication.

If a matter cannot be resolved informally or the employee desires to engage in the formal grievance process, the IDEA employee grievance process shall have two formal levels of review and operate as set forth below:

### Level One

Formal complaints must be filed:

1. Within ten (10) calendar days of the date the employee first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decisions or actions giving rise to the complaint. All time limits for an employee to file a complaint shall be strictly followed unless modified by written consent of IDEA; and
2. By email or hand delivery to any supervisor, administrator, or Human Resources. Every grievance not filed directly with Human Resources shall be forwarded to Human Resources as soon as the supervisor or administrator is aware of its filing.
3. Human Resources shall notify the employee within 3 business days of the filing of the grievance whether the grievance is to be treated as a normal grievance or otherwise

handled by Human Resources. Human Resources may extend the time for making this determination as administratively necessary, but without undue delay.

4. Human Resources shall notify an employee of the dismissal of a grievance if the grievance is materially the same as a prior grievance that was filed, or if the employee raising the grievance is no longer an employee of IDEA at any time during the grievance process. Only current employees may avail themselves of the grievance process
5. Human Resources shall forward the normal grievances for investigation and determination to the Principal if the employee works at a school location, or the Regional Executive Director if the employee is not based at a school location. Human Resources shall provide technical assistance and support to the Principal, Regional Executive Director or designated investigator.
6. The Principal or Executive Director may assign anyone not involved in the matters covered by the grievance to investigate; however, the investigation and written resolution or any report must be approved by the appropriate Principal or Executive Director.
7. If the complaint relates to a specific Principal, Human Resources shall forward and assign to a Principal or executive director not covered by the complaint.
8. The assigned investigator shall take appropriate steps to investigate the allegations, objectively and without bias, which may include a conference with the grieving employee, and shall recommend a resolution and Level One response that is reviewed by the assigned Principal or Executive Director ordinarily within 20 business days of the filing of the complaint. If there are extenuating circumstances, the assigned investigator may, after consultation with the assigned Principal or Executive Director, notify the complainant that it may take an additional 10 business days to resolve. A written resolution of the complaint shall be provided to the employee when appropriate, or if a resolution decision is not made, the employee shall be informed of any ultimate decision.

### Level Two

If the complaint is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction at Level One:

1. The employee may submit a written appeal to Human Resources by completing and submitting the IDEA Level Two Grievance Appeal Form to [ipsgrievance@ideapublicschools.org](mailto:ipsgrievance@ideapublicschools.org). No new information may be included in an appeal, although the appellant must provide in writing the basis for requesting the overturning or modification of the level One response.
2. The appeal notice must be filed within 5 business days of the date of receipt of the written Level One response. If a Principal approved the level One response, the appeal shall be assigned to the regional Executive Director for review. If a regional

Executive Director approved the Level One response, it shall be assigned to the National Executive Director for review.

3. A written resolution and response on the appeal shall ordinarily be provided to the employee within 10 Business days. If there are extenuating circumstances, the appeal decision may take an additional 5 business days to resolve. Any such resolution Level Two decision shall be final and non-appealable.

BOARD APPROVED