

A Helpful Guide for Successfully Solving Problems at School

Keokuk Community School District

Board of Directors

August 2017

Unfairness, misunderstanding, hurt feelings, and conflict are experiences common to us all.

When children experience these problems at school, it causes difficulty not only for the children, but for parents and school staff.

How to successfully solve problems at school is what this guide is all about.

Step 1: Take your concern to the person closest to the problem.

No matter where the problem is, take your concern there first. Whether in the classroom, on the bus, or on the practice field, the quickest and easiest solution is usually found with the staff members most directly involved.

It's best if you make time to talk with school personnel regularly before problems are encountered. Know who your children's teachers, bus drivers, and coaches are and how they may be contacted. Tell them when things are going well and communicate any concerns you have quickly and openly.

If you call for an appointment to see your child's teacher, let the teacher know at that time the general nature of concern. This courtesy provides an opportunity for the teacher to ask other staff members for information that might relate to your problem or concern. If a personal visit isn't possible, call once to state the problem and during that conversation, offer to call back at a time when you can both discuss the situation in more detail.

The problem you or your child faces may be the result of an oversight or misunderstanding that can be easily corrected once it is brought to the attention of the staff member most directly involved. Give that person a chance to tackle the problem first.

If the problem is not resolved...

Step 2: Present your concern to the next level.

The principal is responsible for supervision of staff within buildings. The Director of Transportation supervises all school bus drivers. Each of these individuals is an example of the next level of school personnel you should contact if the staff member closest to the problem hasn't been able to satisfactorily resolve the difficulty.

Also, know that the supervisor's ability to help will be improved if you share the steps you've already taken with the staff member closest to the problem. If you feel uncomfortable dealing directly with the person who is closest to the situation (e.g. teacher, bus driver, etc.), it would be helpful if you will take time to openly share with the principal or supervisor the reasons why. Supervisory personnel will rarely have ready access to the information they need to be of immediate assistance and working through them will often require additional time.

If the problem is not resolved...

Step 3: Talk with the Superintendent of Schools

Sometimes all the best intentions can't solve a problem. When you believe you've taken the problem to the next level but still haven't achieved a satisfactory outcome, the Superintendent of Schools is the next place to go.

Keep in mind that the Superintendent's day starts early and often ends late in the evening. Part of the Superintendent's job requires attendance at meetings outside the district. As a consequence, a meeting with the Superintendent will probably require some advance planning.

If the problem is not resolved...

Step 4: Contact your School Board Members

School Board members are elected to represent the interest of all parents and district residents. You should always feel free to tell them your point of view. School Board members do not, however, have direct authority in day-to-day school operations. Board authority is the result of official actions by a majority of the Board at meetings open to the public.

The Board's primary responsibility is to make policies that guide the school district. Any change in policy requires two readings at two separate public meetings. Some policy changes may require substantial public input and consultation with the school district's attorney. These requirements often increase the time required for the Board to make a response.

So when should a Board member be contacted and what can they do? Contact a Board Member...

- after other means to solve a problem have been tried.
- when you believe a Board policy isn't being enforced.
- when a Board policy is being enforced, but you believe it results in bad consequences.
- when Board policies or procedures are not enforced fairly for all

A Board member may take one or all of the following actions:

- Informally discuss the issue with the Superintendent or other administrators to consider whether policies or rules should be changed.
- Request that the Board review the specific policies that relate to the situation.
- Propose new policies for the Board’s consideration.

School Phone Directory

<u>Building</u>	<u>Administrator</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
George Washington	Nicole Nemecek	524-1953 x 4001
Torrence PreSchool	Nicole Nemecek	524-1953 x 4001
Hawthorne	Mike Marsden	524-3503 x 3001
Hawthorne	Rhett Weis	524-3503 x 3005
Keokuk Middle School	Layne Billings	524-3737 x 2001
Keokuk Middle School	Kevin Henrichs	524-3737 x 2003
Keokuk High School	Adam Magliari	524-2542 x 1001
Keokuk High School	Heather Davis	524-2542 x 1006
Keokuk High School	Zach Summers	524-2542 x 1009
Alternative Schools (9-12)	Adam Magliari	524-2542 x 1001
Central Office	Christine Barnes	524-1402 x 1616

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Jane Abell	524-4744
Alka Khanolkar	526-7574
Gary de Gala	524-1844
Russ Derr	524-4257
Janne Long, President	520-8122
Carrie Steele	795-5303
Kim Wyatt, Vice President	524-2530

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