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UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2020-2021

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Adopted by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S Governing Board (the Board) on August 20, 2020.

This document contains rules and instructions about the filing, investigation and resolution of a Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") complaint regarding an alleged violation by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY of federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs, including non-compliance with laws relating to pupil fees and SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S Local Control and Accountability Plan ("LCAP").

This document includes information about how SANTA ROSA ACADEMY processes UCP complaints concerning particular programs or activities that are subject to the UCP.

What is a Uniform Complaint?

A UCP complaint is a written and signed statement by a complainant alleging a violation of federal or state laws or regulations, which may include an allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or charging pupil fees for participation in an educational activity or non-compliance with the requirements of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S LCAP.

A complainant is any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization who files a written complaint alleging violation of federal or state laws or regulations, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and non-compliance with laws relating to pupil fees or non-compliance with the requirements of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S LCAP.

If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing due to a disability or illiteracy, SANTA ROSA ACADEMY shall assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint.

The Responsibilities of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY will investigate and seek to resolve, in accordance with this SANTA ROSA ACADEMY UCP process, any complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations including, but not limited to, allegations of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying or noncompliance with laws relating to all programs and activities implemented by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY that are subject to the UCP.

- Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Pupils
- After School Education and Safety
- Career Technical and Technical Education, Career Technical, Technical Training
- Compensatory Education
- Course Periods without Educational Content
- Education of Pupils in Foster Care, Pupils who are Homeless, former Juvenile Court Pupils now enrolled in a school district and Children of Military Families
- Every Student Succeeds Act
- Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP)
- Migrant Education
- Physical Education Instructional Minutes
- Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil
- Regional Occupational Centers and Programs
- School Plans for Student Achievement
- School Safety Plans
- School site Councils

In addition, SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S UCP adopted to provide a uniform system of complaint processing for the following types of complaints:

- (1) Complaints regarding "pupil fees," including any fee, deposit or other charge that a pupil or a pupil's parent or guardian are required to pay or any "fee waiver";
- (2) Complaints of discrimination against any protected group including actual or perceived, including discrimination on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any Charter School program or activity (5 CCR §4610); and
- (3) Complaints of violations of state or federal law and regulations governing the following programs including but not limited to: special education, Title II, Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act, consolidated categorical aid, No Child Left Behind, migrant education, career technical and technical education training programs, child care and development programs, child nutrition program. (5 CCR §4610)

The following complaints shall be referred to other agencies for appropriate resolution and are not subject to SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S UCP process set forth in this document unless these procedures are made applicable by separate interagency agreements:

- Allegations of child abuse shall be referred to County Department of Social Services (DSS), Protective Services Division or appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Health and safety complaints regarding a Child Development Program shall be referred to Department of Social Services for licensed facilities, and to the appropriate Child Development regional administrator for licensing-exempt facilities.
- Employment discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints may be referred to the State Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH).
- Allegations of fraud shall be referred to the Legal, Audits and Compliance Branch in the California Department of Education (CDE).

Pupil Fees

A pupil enrolled in a charter school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity.

A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit;
- A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment;
- A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

A pupil fees complaint may be filed using the Contact Information shown below or with the principal of the school or his or her designee. A pupil fees and/or an LCAP complaint may be filed anonymously; however, the complainant must provide evidence or information leading to evidence to support the complaint.

A pupil fee complaint shall be filed no later than one year from the date the alleged violation occurred.

The Local Control Accountability Plan

The LCAP is an important component of the Local Control Funding Formula, the revised school finance system that revised how California funds its K-12 schools. Under the LCFF SANTA ROSA ACADEMY is required to prepare an LCAP, which describes how SANTA ROSA ACADEMY intends to meet annual goals for SANTA ROSA ACADEMY pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities identified pursuant to California *Education Code (EC)* Section 52060(d).

Annual Notice

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY ensures annual dissemination of a written notice of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY complaint procedures to all students, employees, parents or guardians of its students, school and district advisory committee members, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties that includes information regarding allegations about discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S UCP Annual Notice also includes information regarding the requirements of *EC* Section 49010 through 49013 relating to pupil fees and information regarding the requirements of *EC* Section 52075 relating to the LCAP.

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S UCP Annual Notice is distributed in English and in the primary language, pursuant to section 48985 of the Education Code, or mode of communication of the recipient of the notice.

Filing UCP Complaints

Filing Pupil Fees UCP Complaints

A pupil fees complaint may be filed using the Contact Information provided herein or with the principal of a school or his or her designee.

A pupil fees complaint and/or an LCAP complaint may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance.

A pupil fees complaint shall be filed no later than one year from the date the alleged violation occurred.

Filing All Other UCP Complaints

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY will provide an opportunity for complainants and/or representatives to present evidence or information during the course of the investigation of any UCP complaint. Refusal by the complainant to provide the investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation or engage in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegations.

Refusal by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY employees or board members to provide the investigator with access to records and/or other information related to the allegation in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation or engage in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in a finding based on evidence collected that a violation has occurred and may result in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant.

The complaint will be investigated and a written report with a Decision will be issued to the complainant within 60 days from the date of the receipt of the complaint, unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of time.

This report will contain the following elements:

- (1) The findings of fact based on the evidence gathered.
- (2) Conclusions of law.
- (3) Disposition of the complaint.
- (4) The rationale for such a disposition.
- (5) Corrective actions, if any are warranted.
- (6) Notice of the complainant's right to appeal SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision to the CDE.
- (7) Procedures to be followed for initiating an appeal to CDE.

UCP Complaint Investigation

The staff member responsible to receive and investigate UCP complaints and ensure SANTA ROSA ACADEMY compliance is:

Sondra Evans
27587 La Piedra Road, Menifee, CA 92584
(951) 672-2400
sevans@sra.mn

The staff member responsible to receive and investigate UCP complaints and ensure SANTA ROSA ACADEMY compliance is knowledgeable about the laws and programs he or she assigned to investigate.

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY will investigate all allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying against any protected group as identified in *EC* Section 200 and 220 and Government Code (*GC*) Section section 11135, including any actual or perceived characteristics as set forth in Penal Code (*PC*) Section 422.55 or on the basis or a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any program or activity we conduct, which is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from any state financial assistance.

Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints shall be filed no later than six months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or six months from the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.

All complainants are protected from retaliation.

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY will advise all complainants of the right to pursue civil law remedies under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying laws.

Procedures

The following procedures shall be used to address all complaints which allege that SANTA ROSA ACADEMY has committed a violation of a law or regulation specified in Board Policy 1008. Compliance officers shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions.

All parties involved in allegations shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when a complaint meeting or hearing is scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

Step 1: Filing of Complaint

Any individual, public agency, or organization may file a written complaint of alleged noncompliance by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY.

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or harassment shall be initiated no later than six months from the date when the alleged discrimination occurred, or six months from the date when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination. A complaint may be filed by a person who alleges that he/she personally suffered unlawful discrimination or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to unlawful discrimination.

The complaint shall be presented to the compliance officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a code number and date stamp.

If a complainant is unable to put a complaint in writing due to conditions such as a disability or illiteracy, SANTA ROSA ACADEMY staff shall assist him/her in the filing of the complaint.

Step 2: Mediation

Within three days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer may informally discuss with the complainant the possibility of using mediation. If the complainant agrees to mediation, the compliance officer shall make arrangements for this process.

Before initiating the mediation of a discrimination complaint, the compliance officer shall ensure that all parties agree to make the mediator a party to related confidential information. If the mediation process does not resolve the problem within the parameters of law, the compliance officer shall proceed with his/her investigation of the complaint.

The use of mediation shall not extend SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S timelines for investigating and resolving the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to such an extension of time.

Step 3: Investigation of Complaint

The compliance officer is encouraged to hold an investigative meeting within five days of receiving the complaint or an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the complaint. This meeting shall provide an opportunity for the complainant and/or his/her representative to repeat the complaint orally.

The complainant and/or his/her representative shall have an opportunity to present the complaint and evidence or information leading to evidence to support the allegations in the complaint.

A complainant's refusal to provide SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or his/her failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or his/her engagement in any other obstruction of the

investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegation.

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S refusal to provide the investigator with access to records and/or other information related to the allegation in the complaint, or its failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or its engagement in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in a finding, based on evidence collected, that a violation has occurred and may result in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant.

Step 4: Response

OPTION 1:

Unless extended by written agreement with the complainant, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S investigation and decision, as described in Step #5 below, within 60 days of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S receipt of the complaint.

OPTION 2:

Within 30 days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S investigation and decision, as described in Step #5 below. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the compliance officer's decision, he/she may, within five days, file his/her complaint in writing with the Board.

The Board may consider the matter at its next regular Board meeting or at a special Board meeting convened in order to meet the 60-day time limit within which the complaint must be answered. The Board may decide not to hear the complaint, in which case the compliance officer's decision shall be final.

If the Board hears the complaint, the compliance officer shall send the Board's decision to the complainant within 60 days of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S initial receipt of the complaint or within the time period that has been specified in a written agreement with the complainant.

If a SANTA ROSA ACADEMY finds merit in a complaint regarding Pupil Fees, Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and/or Physical Education Instructional Minutes (grades one through six), the remedy shall go to all affected pupils and parents/guardians. SANTA ROSA ACADEMY will make a good-faith attempt to identify and fully reimburse all pupils, parents and guardians who paid a pupil fee within one year prior to the filing of the complaint.

If SANTA ROSA ACADEMY finds merit in a complaint regarding Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil, Course Periods without Educational Content (grades nine through twelve) and/or Education of Pupils in Foster Care, Pupils who are Homeless, former Juvenile Court Pupils now enrolled in a school, and pupils in military families, SANTA ROSA ACADEMY shall provide a remedy to affected pupil.

Step 5: Final Written Decision

SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant. SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision shall be written in English and in the language of the complainant whenever feasible or as required by law.

The decision shall include:

1. The findings of fact based on evidence gathered.
2. The conclusion(s) of law.
3. Disposition of the complaint.
4. Rationale for such disposition.
5. Corrective actions, if any are warranted.
6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision within fifteen (15) days to the CDE and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.
7. For discrimination complaints arising under state law, notice that the complainant must wait until 60 days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies.
8. For discrimination complaints arising under federal law such complaint may be made at any time to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

If an employee is disciplined as a result of the complaint, the decision shall simply state that effective action was taken and that the employee was informed of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S expectations. The report shall not give any further information as to the nature of the disciplinary action.

Civil Law Remedies

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S complaint procedures under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying laws. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints shall be filed no later than six months from the date of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurred, or from the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders. For discrimination complaints arising under state law, however, a complainant must wait until 60 days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies. The moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief and is applicable only if SANTA ROSA ACADEMY has appropriately, and in a timely manner, apprised the complainant of his/her right to file a complaint in accordance with 5 CCR 4622.

UCP Complaint Reporting

Summaries of all UCP complaints shall be publicly reported on a quarterly basis at a regularly scheduled SANTA ROSA ACADEMY board meeting. The report shall include the number of complaints by general subject area with the number of resolved and unresolved complaints but shall not otherwise identify the complainant or any other party(ies). All complaints and responses are public records.

Appeals to the California Department of Education

If dissatisfied with SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the CDE within fifteen (15) days of receiving SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision. When appealing to the CDE, the complainant must specify the basis for the appeal of the decision and whether the facts are incorrect and/or the law has been misapplied. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the locally filed complaint and a copy of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision.

Upon notification by the CDE that the complainant has appealed SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S decision, the Principal or designee shall forward the following documents to the CDE:

1. A copy of the original complaint.
2. A copy of the decision.
3. A summary of the nature and extent of the investigation conducted by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY, if not covered by the decision.
4. A copy of the investigation file, including but not limited to all notes, interviews, and documents submitted by all parties and gathered by the investigator.
5. A report of any action taken to resolve the complaint.
6. A copy of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S complaint procedures.
7. Other relevant information requested by the CDE.

The CDE may directly intervene in the complaint without waiting for action by SANTA ROSA ACADEMY when one of the conditions listed in Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 4650 5 CCR 4650 exists, including cases in which SANTA ROSA ACADEMY has not taken action within 60 days of the date the complaint was filed with SANTA ROSA ACADEMY.

This appeal to the CDE must fully explain the basis for the appeal, stating how the facts of SANTA ROSA ACADEMY'S Decision are incorrect and/or the law is misapplied.

You may request assistance with an appeal using the Appeal Assistance Form located at: <https://www3.cde.ca.gov/ucpemail/>

You may also contact the Categorical Programs Complaints Management Office at 916-319-0929 for assistance.

Citations

California *Education Code (EC)* sections 200, 220, 48985, 49010-49013, 52060-52075

California *Government Code (GC)* sections 11135

California *Penal Code (PC)* section 422.55