

## Section 4. Communication and Positive Resolution

### a. Introduction

For communicating suggestions, concerns, or complaints, please review Section 2626:

<http://www.montanacatholicschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SECTION-2000-Student-Guidelines-and-School-Operations.pdf>

of the Montana Catholic Schools Policy Manual. The MCS School Board exists to support and help guide the administration in their roles of operating the schools. The Board will be an integral part of the grievance process only after all communication and application of the policy, listed above, has been exhausted at the school and MCS Chief Administrator (President) level.

Missoula Catholic Schools seek to work in partnership with parents in the education process. An integral part of this relationship is providing an environment where each member of our community is recognized as a unique individual with rights and responsibilities. Our Catholic heritage provides the basis for our philosophy and action.

The development of a Communication and Positive Resolution Policy is formed in the light of the Gospel teachings, ensuring the rights of adults and students to work, learn, and visit the school in a safe, caring, and Christian environment.

We will endeavor to achieve this by developing a system of rights, responsibilities and strategies to address negative behavior in an atmosphere of mutual respect, compassion, justice, empathy, and faith. This policy is fostered by cooperative negotiation between staff, administration, clergy and parents.

### b. Process

Upon completing all the steps in resolving a concern or grievance, the Missoula Catholic School Board of Limited Jurisdiction will serve as final resolution and will ensure the grievance policy standards were maintained as written and exercise the following steps:

- 1) Submit formal complaint, in writing, to the MCS Board Chair.
- 2) Document receipt of formal request for resolution and notify the President.
- 3) Within 10 days, the Board Chair will determine whether the complaint, on its face, requires further investigation.
- 4) Provide verification of receipt to complainant within 10 business days of receipt. If the complaint is determined to warrant a grievance procedure, Board chair will proceed to Step 5. If it is determined that no grievance procedure is warranted, notice to the complainant will be provided with the verification.
- 5) Assess if there is any conflict of interest.
- 6) Appoint two current MCS board members to hear the complaint.
- 7) Invite a priest from the board or community (if available) to sit on committee.

Upon formation the Positive Resolution Committee will:

- 1) Plan and implement an investigation process.

- 2) Meet with the parties involved.
- 3) Complete report with findings and formal decision.
- 4) Communicate decision in writing to both complainant and respondent.
- 5) Report findings to the MCS President and Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Helena.

The MCS Board will undertake the above process using the guidelines of procedural fairness, confidentiality, accurate record keeping, and appropriate remedy to the situation.

#### **c. Review**

Either party may request a review of the process. The review will be undertaken by the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Helena in written form, within 10 days of the date of findings notification.

*The decision of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Helena will be final.*

#### **d. Conflict of Interest**

In an instance in which there is a conflict of interest, the complaint is to be dealt with in such a way that the two respective parties are not the sole mediators of the situation. If the conflict itself involves a member of the administration of Missoula Catholic Schools or the Missoula Catholic Schools Grievance Committee, that person is de facto eliminated from investigating the complaint. If necessary, having exhausted all possible avenues for mediation, then the issue is elevated to the highest level necessary, which is the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Helena.