

School Name: Thomas Academy

Policy Title: Grievance Policy

Policy Number/Reference Code: (if applicable)

Approval Authority: Thomas Academy Board

Reference(s): CHTR-006IIA, 16 NCAC 006G.0506(a)(1)

Effective Date:

Previous Effective Date(s):

Grievance Policy

I. Purpose

This policy establishes procedures for addressing complaints and grievances filed by students, parents/guardians and staff members at **Thomas Academy**. This policy is designed to provide a fair, consistent, and expeditious process for resolving grievances in accordance with North Carolina charter school laws and regulations.

II. Definitions

1. **Grievance:** A formal written complaint alleging a violation of school policy, state or federal law, or expressing dissatisfaction with decisions, actions, or inactions by school personnel.
2. **Grievant:** Any student, parent/guardian, or staff member who files a grievance.
3. **Respondent:** The person or entity against whom the grievance is filed.
4. **School Day and/or School Events:** Any day when school is in session according to the school calendar, including any sanctioned school sponsored events.
5. **Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the grievance has been filed **15 calendar days** of the meeting with the Administrator. and/or Director The **15 calendar day** deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Administrator and/or Director.

III. Informal Resolution

Prior to filing a formal grievance, the grievant is encouraged to seek informal resolution by discussing the concern directly with the individual(s) involved.

If the parent/guardian/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Administrator and/or Director and the issue meets the definition of a grievance, the parent/guardian/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below in the Formal Grievance Process. Many issues that a parent/guardian/student has with the classroom, teacher or school will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or grade-level Administrator. Many grievances can be resolved through open,

respectful communication.

IV. Parent / Guardian / Student Formal Grievance Process

Step 1:

1. If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, the grievant shall submit a written grievance to the Administrator and/or Director within ten (10) school days of the event or action that is the subject of the grievance.
2. The written grievance must include:
 - The grievant's name and contact information
 - Date of submission
 - A detailed description of the grievance, including dates, times, and specific facts
 - Names of any witnesses
 - Reference to any relevant policies, laws, or regulations
 - Description of prior attempts at resolution
 - The specific remedy or action requested
3. The Administrator and/or Director shall acknowledge receipt of the grievance within three (3) school days.
4. The Administrator and/or Director shall investigate the grievance, which may include meetings with the grievant, respondent, and any witnesses.
5. The Administrator and/or Director shall provide a written decision within ten (10) school days of receiving the grievance, unless additional time is necessary and communicated to the grievant.

Step 2:

1. If the grievant is not satisfied with the Administrator's and/or Director's decision, the grievant may appeal to the Board of Directors within five (5) school days of receiving the Administrator's and/or Director's decision.
2. The appeal must be in writing and include:
 - A copy of the original grievance
 - A copy of the Administrator's and/or Director's decision
 - A statement explaining why the grievant disagrees with the Administrator's and/or Director's decision
3. The Board Chair shall acknowledge receipt of the appeal within three (3) school days.
4. The Board Chair may designate a committee to review the grievance or place it on the agenda for the next regular Board meeting, or at the discretion of the Board and/or Committee a special meeting can be called as long as it occurs within the thirty (30) days of the appeal.
5. The Board or designated committee shall review the grievance record and may, at its discretion, hear additional information from the grievant, respondent, or other

relevant parties.

6. The Board shall issue a written decision within ten (10) school days after the Board meeting where the grievance was considered.
7. The Board's decision is final except in cases where:
 - The grievance involves a claimed violation of state or federal law
 - The grievance involves a claimed violation of the charter agreement with the NC State Board of Education
 - The grievance involves a claimed violation of the school's bylaws

V. Employee Formal Grievance Process

Step 1. Immediate Supervisor

1. The employee must submit a written grievance to their immediate supervisor within ten (10) working days of the incident or issue.
2. The written grievance must include:
 - Description of the grievance and relevant facts
 - Date(s) of the incident(s)
 - Explanation of prior attempts to resolve the issue
 - Specific policy, procedure, or rule allegedly violated (if applicable)
 - Desired resolution
3. The supervisor shall meet with the employee within five (5) working days of receiving the grievance.
4. The supervisor shall provide a written response within five (5) working days after the meeting.

Step 2: Administrator and/or Director

1. If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1, the employee may appeal to the Administrator and/or Director within five (5) working days of receiving the supervisor's response.
2. The appeal must include the original grievance, the supervisor's response, and an explanation of why the response was unsatisfactory.
3. The Administrator and/or Director shall meet with the employee within five (5) working days of receiving the appeal.
4. The Administrator and/or Director shall provide a written response within ten (10) working days after the meeting.

Step 3: The Board

1. If the grievance remains unresolved after Step 2, the employee may appeal to the Board within five (5) working days of receiving the Administrator's and/or Director's response.
2. The appeal must include all previous documentation and responses, and an explanation of why the response at Step 1 was unsatisfactory.

3. The Board shall appoint a Grievance Committee and it shall review the grievance and may, at its discretion:
 - Request additional information from any party
 - Meet with the parties involved
 - Conduct an investigation
4. The Committee shall provide a written recommendation to the full Board of Directors within fifteen (15) working days of receiving the appeal.

Step 4. The Board of Director's

1. The Board of Directors shall consider the Committee's recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting, or at a special meeting if warranted.
2. The Board may:
 - Accept the Committee's recommendation
 - Modify the recommendation
 - Reject the recommendation and provide an alternative resolution
 - Return the matter to the Committee for further investigation
3. The decision of the Board shall be final and binding.
4. The employee shall receive written notification of the Board's decision within five (5) working days after the Board meeting.

VI. General Provisions

1. **Confidentiality:** All grievances shall be handled with appropriate confidentiality. However, information may be shared as necessary to conduct a thorough investigation. 2.

Non-Retaliation: Thomas Academy prohibits retaliation against any individual who files a grievance or participates in the grievance process. Any instances of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be addressed promptly. 3. **Representation:** Grievants may be accompanied by a representative of their choice during meetings related to the grievance.

4. **Timelines:**

- All time limits may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties involved.
- If the grievant fails to appeal a decision within the specified time limits, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
- If the school fails to respond within the specified time limits, the grievant may proceed to the next level.

5. **Record Keeping:** Records related to grievances shall be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years and no more than 5 years in accordance with state requirements (20 USC 1232g - FERPA).

6. **Annual Review:** This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

VII. Special Circumstances

Staff Grievances

1. Staff members shall follow the same procedure outlined above, except:
 - Grievances related to employment matters should first be addressed through the school's human resources department, if applicable.

- Certain employment matters may be subject to separate policies as outlined in the staff handbook.

Student Disciplinary Appeals

1. Appeals of student disciplinary actions shall follow the procedures outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
2. Long-term suspensions and expulsions have specific appeal procedures that comply with North Carolina law [\(Chapter 115C - Article 27\)](#).

Special Education Concerns

1. Grievances related to special education services shall follow this policy, but grievants are advised that additional rights and procedures exist under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. Parents/guardians may request mediation or file a complaint with the NC Department of Public Instruction's Exceptional Children Division.

VIII. Annual Notification

This grievance policy shall be published on the **school website**.

IX. Annual Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Thomas Academy Board and any recommended changes shall be presented to the full Board for consideration.

Board Chair Signature:

Signed by:

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Date: 9/29/2026