



Each charter school has a differentiated approach to amicably resolve complaints that an individual or group may bring to the board of trustees alleging a violation of the provisions of the New York Charter Schools Act, the charter, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the school. These approaches are generally set forth in the charter school's charter, charter agreement, board bylaws, and authorized approved policies and procedures. As a resource, the NYSED Charter School Office has developed this list of effective practices that have been implemented in charter schools across the state. This resource is intended to serve as a conversation starter for your school staff.

Education Law §2855(4) outlines a three-step process for complaints regarding charter schools, as follows:

- e. Why did the concern occur?
  - f. What is an acceptable solution?
6. Provide information on how parents or other stakeholders can resolve complaints informally. Be seen as a resource. It is important for parents to have a voice and feel that their concerns have been heard.
  7. Include up-to-date contact information for the board of trustees and the school's authorizer in the complaint policy, student/family handbook, and the school's discipline policy. Ensure that all documents contain the same version of the policy.
  8. Reach out to stakeholders, including parents, when notified by NYSED/the authorizer of an imminent complaint.
  9. Develop an internal protocol and timeline for investigations and decisions by the board. This takes a lot of the unknown out of the process and ensures that all stakeholders know what has to happen and when to address complaints. The process should include a procedure for acknowledging receipt of the complaint so that complainants know their concerns are being addressed.
  10. Reach out to the NYSED Charter School Office for assistance (e.g., delayed special education evaluations). We are here as a resource.
  11. In an emergency:
    - a. Ensure student safety
    - b. Contact emergency services and/or law enforcement, as needed;
    - c. Contact the school's attorney for advice on how to proceed
    - d. Contact your authorizer to provide information and keep them updated so they do not first learn about school related incidents through a complaint or in the news. The more proactive schools are, the better your authorizer is able to help the school work through the issue at hand.