Affirmative Action Complaint Procedure

In keeping with federal/state anti-discrimination legislation, the Board of Education has adopted and hereby publishes the Grievance Procedure provided for the resolution of student, employee, and parent complaints.

Purpose: To provide students, employees, and parents a procedure by which they can seek remedy for alleged violations related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, sex ancestry, national origin, or social economic status.

Definition: Grievance- A formal written complaint
Grievant- Any student, employee, or parent aggrieved by a decision or condition falling under the guidelines of federal and/or state anti-discrimination laws.
Affirmative Action Officer- The district employee designated to coordinate efforts with anti-discrimination legislation and charged with the responsibility of investigating complaints.
Title IX – The Education amendment was signed by President Nixon in summer of 1972 to become a law. The main purpose of Title IX is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that is federally funded.
Title IX Coordinator- Is the individual designated by the District to coordinate the District’s compliance with Title IX including overseeing all sex discrimination complaints and identifying and addressing any patterns or systematic problems that arise during the review of such complaints.
ADA/Section 504- Section 504 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based on disability. Section 504 is an anti-discrimination civil rights statue that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are meet.
Section ADA/504 Coordinator- The ADA/Section 504 coordinator is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Board of Education to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and investigates any concerns, complaints or requests regarding access to Board programs, services or activities
The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries/complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies:

**Affirmative Action Officer:**  
Brian Shakespeare  
_bshakespeare@gcecnj.org_  
Phone: 856-468-1445 ext. 2228

**Title IX Coordinator:**  
Aja Thomas  
_athomas@gcecnj.org_  
Phone: 856-468-6530 ext. 1023

**ADA / Section 504 Student Coordinator:**  
Dr. Susan Heiken  
_sheiken@gcecnj.org_  
Phone: 856-468-1445 ext. 2021

**ADA/Section 504 Staff Coordinator:**  
Aja Thomas  
_athomas@gcecnj.org_  
Phone: 856-468-6530 ext. 1023

**Title II Coordinator:**  
Brian Shakespeare  
_bshakespeare@gcecnj.org_  
Phone: 856-468-1445 ext. 2228

**Procedure:**

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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The grievant must present the complaint in written form to the responsible designated person, as the Affirmative Action Officer. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the AA Officer will include the appropriate Section 504, Title IX, Title VI, or Title II Coordinator.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Affirmative Action Officer has seven working days in which to investigate and respond to the grievant. The grievant may provide any evidence/documentation and may provide names of individuals as witnesses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>If not satisfied, the grievant may appeal within ten working days to the Superintendent or designee (not Affirmative Action Officer or Section 504, Title IX, Title VI, or Title II Coordinator involved in the investigation).</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Response by the Superintendent or designee must be given within five working days.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>If the grievant is not satisfied at this level, an appeal may be made within ten working days to the Board of Education, which will hear the complaint at the next regular meeting or within thirty calendar days. Board hearing shall be conducted so as to</td>
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accord due process to all parties involved in the complaint such as written notice of hearing dates, right to counsel, right to present witnesses, right to cross-examine and to present written statement. The decision of the Board shall be by a majority of the members at a meeting, which shall be public.

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<th>The Board of Education of the Special Services School District and the Vocational School District of the County of Gloucester shall respond to the grievant within thirty calendar days.</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>If the grievant is not satisfied with the Board’s decision, the grievant can have it referred to the County Superintendent of Schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The grievant maintains the right to by-pass the grievance procedure and submit the complaint directly to any or all of the following agencies:</td>
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|   | 1. The Commissioner of Education  
|   | Bureau of Controversies and Disputes  
|   | New Jersey Department of Education  
|   | P.O. BOX 500  
|   | Trenton, NJ 08625  
|   | Phone: 609-292-5705 |
|   | 2. Equal Employment Opportunity  
|   | Commission Newark District Office  
|   | 1 Newark Center, 21st Floor  
|   | Newark, NJ 07102  
|   | Phone: 800-669-4000 or 973-645-6383 |
|   | U.S. Department of Education  
|   | 32 Old Slip, 26th Floor  
|   | New York, NY 10005-2500  
|   | Phone: 646-428-3900 or TDD: 877-521-2172  
|   | Email: OCR.NewYork@ed.gov |
|   | 4. New Jersey Division of Civil Rights  
|   | 140 East Front Street, 6th Floor  
|   | P.O. Box 090  
|   | Trenton, NJ 08625-0090  
|   | Phone: 609-292-4605 or TDD 609-292-1785 |