

# INTERNAL COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES



**“Climbing Toward College & Career Readiness”**

Si usted desea recibir esta información en español, por favor dejemos saber llamando a la oficina al numero: 818-994-2904 o 818-787-8521.

Այս տեղեկությունները Հայերենով ստանալու համար կը խնդրենք զանգահարել դպրոցի գրասենյակին՝ 818-994-2904 կամ 818-787-8521 համարներով:

ACS—K-2 Campus: 6555 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401 - Office: (818) 994-2904 Fax: (818) 994-8096

ACS—2-5 Campus: 13400 Erwin St., Van Nuys, CA 91401 - Office: (818) 787-9527 Fax: (818) 786-3627

Website: [www.araratcharterschool.com](http://www.araratcharterschool.com)

Inspiring Collaboration, Innovation, & Empowerment

# INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Ararat Charter School (“ACS” or “the Charter School”) is an Independent Charter School, and is governed by its own Governing Board (“Board”). If an issue arises that is not a violation of any applicable law or a term of the ACS charter then resolution should be pursued by contacting the responsible parties of authority in this order:

- 1) TEACHER/STAFF
- 2) PRINCIPAL/DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND COMPLIANCE
- 3) BOARD CHAIRPERSON
- 4) THE GOVERNING BOARD

Every effort should be made to address concerns at the informal level with faculty and the school leadership. If concerns are not resolved or addressed to everyone’s satisfaction at the teacher level, the Parent/Guardian may request a meeting with the Principal/Director of Operations or submit a written informal complaint to the Principal/Director of Operations. The Governing Board has invested authority in the Principal/Director of Operations to deal with complaints and concerns. The Principal/Director of Operations will work with all parties concerned to investigate the issue and reach a resolution. If still not satisfied with the Principal’s/Director of Operation’s findings/resolution or if one isn’t reached, complainants may take their concerns to the Board Chairperson and finally to the entire Governing Board if necessary. The decision of the Board, however, will be final.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall be used to address all complaints which allege that ACS has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs. ACS compliance officer(s) 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 ACS.

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be initiated no later than six (6) months from the date when the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurred, or six (6) months from the date when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. A complaint may be filed by a person who alleges that he or she personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Pupils fee complaints shall be filed no later than one (1) year from the date the alleged violation occurred.

The complaint shall be presented to the compliance officer(s) 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, ACS staff shall assist him or her in the filing of the complaint.

### Step 2: Mediation

Within seven (7) days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer(s) may informally discuss with the complainant the possibility of using mediation. If the complainant agrees to mediation, the compliance officer(s) shall make arrangements for this process.

Before initiating the mediation of an unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying complaint, the compliance officer(s) 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(s) shall proceed with his or her investigation of the complaint. The use of mediation shall not extend the Charter School'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(s) is encouraged to hold an investigative meeting within seven (7) 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 or her representative to repeat the complaint orally.

The complainant and/or his or 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 the Charter School's investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or his or her failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation, or his or 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.

The Charter School'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**

Unless extended by written agreement with the complainant, the compliance officer(s) shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of ACS's investigation and decision, as described in Step #5 below, within sixty (60) days of the Charter School's receipt of the complaint.

### **Step 5: Final Written Decision**

ACS's decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant. ACS'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; and
6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal ACS's decision within fifteen (15) days to the CDE and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.

7. For unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints arising under state law, notice that the complainant must wait until sixty (60) days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies.
8. For unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying 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 the investigation of a complaint results in discipline to a student or an employee, the decision shall simply state that effective action was taken and that the student or employee was informed of appropriate expectations. The report shall not give any further information as to the nature of the disciplinary action.



ARARAT CHARTER SCHOOL
INTERNAL COMPLAINT FORM

Ararat Charter School ("ACS") is an Independent Charter School, and is governed by its own Governing Board. If an issue arises that is not a violation of any applicable law or a term of the ACS charter then resolution should be pursued by contacting the responsible parties of authority in this order: 1) TEACHER, 2) PRINCIPAL/DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, 3) BOARD CHAIRPERSON, 4) THE GOVERNING BOARD. Every effort should be made to address concerns at the informal level with the child's teacher and/or Principal/Director of Operations I. If concerns are not resolved or addressed to everyone's satisfaction at the teacher level, the Parent/Guardian may request a meeting with the Principal/Director of Operations or submit a written informal complaint to the Principal/Director of Operations. The Governing Board has invested authority in the Principal/Director of Operations to deal with complaints and concerns. The Principal/Director of Operations will work with all parties concerned to investigate the issue and reach a resolution. If still not satisfied with the Principal's/Director of Operation's findings/resolution or if one isn't reached, complainants may take their concerns to the Board Chairperson and finally to the entire Governing Board if necessary. The decision of the Board, however, will be final.

Last Name: First Name:

Student Name (if applicable): Grade: Today's Date:

Address: Apt/Suite #:

City: State: Zip Code:

Home Phone: Cell Phone: Work Phone:

Email Address: Date of Alleged Violation(s):

Preferred Contact: [ ] Home Phone [ ] Text [ ] Work Phone [ ] Email

1. Please give us as much detail as possible about the situation you are concerned about such as: your initial concern, what actions you've taken to resolve it, name of parties involved, dates, witnesses, etc:

2. Any prior discussions regarding the above listed concern? [ ] No [ ] Yes

If yes, please indicate to whom and when:

