Employee Grievance Policy and Process

Mountain Sunrise Academy — Adopted by the Board of Directors: 8/18/26

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and process is to facilitate the resolution of serious issues, raised by employees, that interfere with the realization of Mountain Sunrise Academy's (MSA) Vision. The process described below is designed to resolve those issues in an efficient manner, protecting the rights of all MSA employees without diluting individual responsibility or compromising compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and ordinances.

This process should be used when there are ethical issues involving school funds, unethical treatment of children, serious non-compliance with regulation that cannot be resolved in any other manner, or unresolved discrimination or conflict-of-interest complaints. (Note: this is not an alternative method of reporting harassment or a hostile work environment — those complaints are handled through the processes described in the employee handbook.)

Safety comes first

Concerns involving the abuse of a child, immediate danger to anyone on MSA's campus, or destruction of property must be reported immediately to the Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director and/or law enforcement as appropriate. Suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported directly to the Utah Division of Child and Family Services (1-855-323-3237) or law enforcement, as Utah law requires. In an emergency, call 911.

Policy

It is the policy of Mountain Sunrise Academy to resolve grievances as quickly and fairly as possible, in alignment with the school's core values, mission, and vision. While the school is a publicly chartered school, it is not under the policies or procedures of any public school district or school board. MSA reserves the right to implement its own policies and procedures as it deems appropriate, without appeal, except as stipulated by state or federal law, regulation, or ordinance.

This process is not:

1. A method of complaining about decisions made by leadership.
2. A way of reporting the performance deficiencies of co-workers (unless that deficiency involves a violation of state law, regulation, or local ordinance).
3. An anonymous complaint system or a method of making suggestions.

4. An appeal process for poor performance reviews or disciplinary actions.
5. A process for complaints about pay or benefits.
6. A process for complaints about curriculum methodologies (unless they involve compliance issues).
7. A process for complaints about harassment of employees or a hostile work environment. (Such complaints are resolved through other policies and processes as described in the employee handbook.)

Definitions

Concern: any issue raised verbally or in writing to co-workers, supervisors, leadership, or the Board. Most Concerns are resolved in Steps 1 and 2 below.

Grievance: a Concern of significant consequence, beyond the normal operating processes of MSA, in which the filing employee is seeking action. A Concern becomes a formal Grievance when it is submitted in writing under Step 3 below.

Grievance Process

The following process will be used to bring Concerns and Grievances to the attention of MSA leadership or its Board.

1. Bring the matter to the attention of your immediate supervisor or manager, and work together to resolve the issue. Unless the Concern is time-sensitive, please allow at least 7 business days for resolution before taking the next step.
2. If the Concern remains unresolved, raise it with the Executive Director (ED) or Assistant Executive Director (AED). The employee and the ED will work together to resolve the issue — again, unless the Concern is time-sensitive, please allow at least 7 business days before taking the next step.
3. If the issue is persistent and remains unresolved, send the ED an email or written communication requesting a written response or solution. Such written requests must include the following:
    a. Notice that this is part of a possible “Employee Grievance.”
    b. A request for a written response.
    c. The full contact information of the person filing the Concern.
    d. A full description of the Concern, its current status, all of the employees, students, and other people involved (names are required of everybody involved, including witnesses or those providing information), and what previous attempts have been made to resolve it.
    e. A suggestion of the action needed to resolve the Concern.
    f. A written acknowledgement that the information contained in the communication

may be released as part of a GRAMA request, in accordance with the law governing such releases.

g. The employee's signature if physically delivered; otherwise, the email must be sent from the employee's MSA email account.

4. The ED will respond in writing, acknowledging that they have received the written Concern and that it is now considered a formal Grievance. At this time, the ED may request additional information or begin a review of the situation.
   a. The ED will respond to the request, in writing, within 14 calendar days of receiving the written Grievance or within three business days of receiving all required information, whichever is longer.
   b. Extensions due to vacation or the unavailability of key information may sometimes be needed; if so, the ED will provide a progress report to the filing employee at least once every five business days until a full response can be provided.
   c. Any Grievance that takes more than 30 calendar days to resolve will be automatically forwarded to the next step in the process. Any Grievance not acknowledged within 5 business days will automatically proceed to the next step in the process.
   d. Grievances filed during the summer months when MSA is not fully operating will have all deadlines doubled.

5. If the employee is unsatisfied with the decision or resolution of the ED, a single appeal may be made to the Board of Directors by sending a written letter or email to **msachartercouncil@mountainsunriseacademy.org** or physically delivering it to The front desk, with the following information included:
   a. All of the information required above in Step 3.
   b. A summary of the timeline of the completion of all of the above steps.
   c. A copy of the ED's response.
   d. An argument as to why the ED's decision or finding was incorrect, or why the ED does not have the authority to make that decision.
   e. Anything about the situation that requires immediate attention (such as compliance time constraints).
   f. Contact information.

6. The Board will acknowledge the Grievance in writing within two business days of receiving it, and may request additional information from the filing employee. Except as otherwise noted below, the Board will formally reply within 30 calendar days of receiving the Grievance. If a regularly scheduled Board meeting falls within that period and at least 7 calendar days after the Grievance is received, the Board will instead reply within two business days following that meeting.
   a. The Board's decisions are final and at its sole discretion, except where state or local law, regulation, or ordinance provides for further review.
   b. The Board reserves the right to gather additional information, conduct

investigations, interview employees, or consult outside experts, government agencies, or attorneys as needed to render an appropriate decision.

c. The Board may extend the deadline for resolution by up to 14 calendar days to facilitate a correct resolution, and will provide a status report to the employee at the midpoint of any such extension.

General Provisions

This policy does not relieve any MSA employee of their legal and ethical reporting responsibilities under all applicable laws and regulations.
No retaliatory action will be taken against any employee who files a grievance in good faith. Any retaliatory action by any employee, at any level, must be reported to the person currently reviewing the Concern or Grievance, or to the Board.

The Board reserves the right, however, to discipline or terminate the employment of employees who knowingly file spurious grievances, misrepresent facts, fabricate records, or knowingly attempt to mislead any leader, administrator, or Board member at any point in the process described above. Employees who use this process for the express purpose of damaging a co-worker's reputation are subject to disciplinary action.

While MSA will endeavor to keep all Grievances confidential to the degree it can, employees must be aware that MSA is subject to public records requests under Utah's Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA). Additionally, some information may be disclosed as part of any investigation or fact-finding efforts necessary to resolve the matter. If the filing employee discloses any information about the grievance to another employee, MSA will consider that employee to be fully authorized by the filing employee to receive information about the pending Grievance or Concern.

MSA, its ED, and its Board reserve the right to dismiss any Concern or Grievance that the filing employee, as part of their job, is tasked with resolving.