

Soledad USD

Exhibit

Uniform Complaint Procedures

E 1312.3

Community Relations

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF THE UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (UCP)

This document contains rules and instructions about the filing, investigation and resolution of a Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) complaint regarding an alleged violation by a local educational agency of federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and noncompliance with laws relating to student fees.

This document presents information about how the Soledad Unified School District processes UCP complaints concerning particular programs or activities in which we receive state or federal funding. A complaint is a written and signed statement by a complainant alleging a violation of federal or state laws or regulations, which may include an allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and charging student fees for participation in an educational activity. A complainant is any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization who files a written complaint alleging violation of federal or state laws or regulations, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and noncompliance with laws relating to student fees. If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing, due to a disability or illiteracy, Soledad Unified School District shall assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint.

Programs or activities in which Soledad Unified School District receives state or federal funding are:

- * Adult Education
- * Consolidated Categorical Aid Programs
- * Migrant Education
- * Career Technical and Technical Education and Training Programs
- * Child Care and Developmental Programs
- * Child Nutrition Programs
- * Special Education Programs
- * Safety Planning Requirements

A student fee is a fee, deposit, or other charge imposed on students, or a student's parents/guardians, in violation of state codes and constitutional provisions which require educational activities to be provided free of charge to all students without regard to their families'

ability or willingness to pay fees or request special waivers. Educational activities are those offered by a school, school district, charter school, or county office of education that constitute a fundamental part of education, including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities.

A student fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

A fee charged to a student as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.

A security deposit, or other payment, that a student is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment.

A purchase that a student is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

This document also applies to the filing of complaints which allege unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying against any protected group as identified under Education Code 200 and 220 and Government Code 11135, including those with actual or perceived characteristics such as age, ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any program or activity conducted by a local agency, which is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from any state financial assistance.

The following complaints shall be referred to other agencies for appropriate resolution and are not subject to our UCP process set forth in this document unless these procedures are made applicable by separate interagency agreements:

1. Allegations of child abuse shall be referred to County Department of Social Services (DSS), Protective Services Division or appropriate law enforcement agency.
2. Health and safety complaints regarding a Child Development Program shall be referred to Department of Social Services for licensed facilities, and to the appropriate Child Development regional administrator for licensing-exempt facilities.
3. Employment discrimination complaints shall be sent to the State Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH).
4. Allegations of fraud shall be referred to the Legal, Audits and Compliance Branch in the California Department of Education (CDE).

The responsibilities of the Soledad Unified School District

Soledad Unified School District has the primary responsibility to insure compliance with

applicable state and federal laws and regulations. We shall investigate complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and/or alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and charging student fees for participation in an educational activity and seek to resolve those complaints in accordance with our UCP procedures.

In regards to complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to student fees, if Soledad Unified School District finds merit in a complaint a remedy will be provided to all affected students, parents/guardians, that, where applicable, will include reasonable efforts by Soledad Unified School District to ensure full reimbursement to all affected students, parents/guardians.

Our UCP policies shall ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation and that the identity of a complainant alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying remain confidential as appropriate. We submitted our UCP policies and procedures to our local Board for approval and adoption (see the top of this document for final adoption date).

The person responsible for receiving and investigating complaints and ensuring our compliance with state and federal laws and regulations is:

Director of Special Projects
Support Services
1261 Metz Road
Soledad, CA 93960
(831) 678-3987

We ensure that the person above, who is responsible for compliance and/or investigations, is knowledgeable about the laws/programs that he/she is assigned to investigate. Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to student fees are filed with a principal of a school.

We shall annually notify in writing our students, employees, parents/guardians of our students, the district advisory committee, school advisory committees, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties of our UCP process regarding an alleged violation by a local agency of federal or state law or regulations governing educational programs, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and noncompliance with laws relating to student fees. The UCP Annual Notice will be disseminated to all of the six required groups each year and will include information on how to appeal to the CDE. An appeal is a request made in writing to a level higher than the original reviewing level by an aggrieved party requesting reconsideration or a reinvestigation of the lower adjudicating body's decision.

Our UCP Annual Notice shall also advise the recipient of any civil law remedies that may be available under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying laws, if applicable, and of the appeal pursuant to Education Code 262.3. Our UCP Annual Notice shall be in English and in the primary language, pursuant to 48985 of the Education Code, or mode of communication of the recipient of the notice.

A copy of this UCP complaint policies and procedures document shall be available free of

charge.

Filing a complaint with the Soledad Unified School District

Except for Williams Complaints regarding instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health or safety of students or staff, and teacher vacancies or misassignments, and complaints that allege discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, any individual, public agency or organization may file a written complaint with our district superintendent or his or her designee alleging a matter which, if true, would constitute a violation by our LEA of federal or state law or regulation governing a program. A complaint of noncompliance with laws relating to student fees may be filed with the principal of a school under the Uniform Complaint Procedures and may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees.

An investigation of alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying shall be initiated by filing a complaint no later than six months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurred, or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The time for filing may be extended in writing by our district superintendent or his or her designee, upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension. The period for filing may be extended by our superintendent or his or her designee for good cause for a period not to exceed 90 calendar days following the expiration of the six month time period. Our superintendent shall respond immediately upon a receipt of a request for extension.

The complaint shall be filed by one who alleges that he or she has personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying or by one who believes an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying prohibited by this part.

An investigation of a discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying complaint shall be conducted in a manner that protects confidentiality of the parties and maintains the integrity of the process.

Except for Williams Complaints, within 60 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the complaint, we shall conduct and complete an investigation of the complaint in accordance with our UCP policies and procedures and prepare a written Decision; also known as a final report. This time period may be extended by written agreement of the complainant.

The investigation shall include an opportunity for the complainant, or the complainant's representative, or both, to present the complaint(s) and evidence or information leading to evidence to support the allegations of non-compliance with state and federal laws and/or regulations.

Refusal by the complainant to provide the investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation

or engage in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegations.

Refusal by Soledad Unified School District to provide the investigator with access to records and/or other information related to the allegation in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation or engage 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.

We shall issue a Decision based on the evidence. The Decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant within 60 calendar days from receipt of the complaint by the local educational agency. The Decision should contain:

1. The findings of fact based on the evidence gathered,
2. Conclusion of law,
3. Disposition of the complaint,
4. The rationale for such disposition,
5. Corrective actions, if any are warranted,
6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal our LEA Decision to the CDE, and
7. Procedures to be followed for initiating an appeal to the CDE.

Nothing in this document shall prohibit anyone involved in the complaint from utilizing alternative methods to resolve the allegations, such as mediation. Nor are we prohibited from resolving complaints prior to the formal filing of a written complaint. Mediation is a problem solving activity whereby a third party assists the parties to the dispute in resolving the complaint.