

## **Citizen Concerns**

**The School Board of Hamlin School District No. 28-3 welcomes constructive criticism of the schools through whatever medium when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program.**

**The Board places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in such a manner that employees are freed from unnecessary, spiteful, or negative criticism and complaints.**

**The Board also recognizes their obligation to identify responsible and valid criticism and channel it to productive uses. The Board understands that people have a right to question their public officials and to level criticism whenever they see fit. Criticism is vital to the democratic process. The educational system, as does any other social institution, needs and is nourished by constant criticism and evaluation. Criticism of the schools, even when ill-informed and/or ill-advised, is an expression of free speech. No aspect of education can properly be hidden or put beyond the range of examination or disagreement.**

**If the concern or suggestion pertains to a student related classroom activity or incident, citizens are directed to first contact the teacher, or the building principal if unable to reach the teacher. Matters involving building procedures, auxiliary programs, or activity programs should be directed to the person directly responsible for the activity supervisor.**

**In the event that the citizen is not satisfied with the action of the teacher, supervisor, or principal, the superintendent shall be contacted next regarding the concern. An opportunity for the citizen to be heard by the school board is then available to the person if he/she so desires.**

**Board members, when contacted by the public about problems, are requested to use the above procedure unless circumstances dictate that the concern be directed to the superintendent. The superintendent will then process the complaint using the above described process.**

**In the event that a parent, student, employee, or district stakeholder who has a concern regarding the use of and/or funding of any federal program and is unable to solve the issue, may address the concern in writing to the district's superintendent. An opportunity for the citizen to be heard by the school board is then available to the person if he/she so desires. In the event that the citizen is not satisfied with the action of the superintendent and school board, an opportunity for the citizen to be heard by the South Dakota Department of Education is then available to the person if he/she so desires.**

**Disputes addressing the enrollment, transportation (including inter-district disputes), and other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness are also addressed under this procedure. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth may initiate the dispute resolution process directly at the school they choose, as well as at the district or district's homeless liaison's office. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision. Students should be provided with all services for which they are eligible while disputes are resolved.**