



Complaints and Grievances Procedure

Elm Community Charter School welcomes questions and concerns from families and works to resolve them fairly and promptly. Most concerns can be resolved informally, and families are encouraged to start there. Certain concerns follow a formal process required by New York State Education Law § 2855(4).

Informal Concerns

For everyday concerns — such as questions about a class, a teacher, grades, promotion or retention, homework, or a disciplinary decision — families should first speak with the staff member closest to the issue, usually the classroom teacher. If the concern is not resolved, families should raise it with the Principal or a member of the school leadership team. Elm works to address these concerns quickly, and most matters are resolved at this level.

Formal Complaints (Education Law § 2855(4))

A formal complaint is an allegation that Elm has violated its charter, the New York Charter Schools Act, or another law relating to the management or operation of the school. Any parent, or any other individual or group, may file a formal complaint using the process below. A copy of this policy is available to any family or member of the public upon request from the Main Office.

Step 1 — Complaint to the Board of Trustees.

A formal complaint must first be made, in writing, to Elm's Board of Trustees. Written complaints may be submitted by email to elmboard@elmcharterschool.org or left in hard copy at the Main Office, addressed to the Board of Trustees. The complaint should describe the alleged violation, the facts supporting it, and the relief requested. The Board, or its designee, will investigate and provide the complainant with a written decision. This written decision will be provided within 45 days of the complaint, will

explain the reasoning behind it, and will include notice of the right to appeal to SUNY-CSI along with a copy of SUNY-CSI's Grievance Guidelines.

Step 2 — Appeal to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Board's decision — or the Board does not respond within 45 days — the complainant may appeal to Elm's authorizer, the Charter Schools Institute of the State University of New York (SUNY-CSI). The appeal should include a description of the alleged violation of law or charter, the response received from the Board, copies of any related correspondence, and the relief sought. Appeals may be sent to:

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
H. Carl McCall SUNY Building
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246
charters@suny.edu

Step 3 — Appeal to the Board of Regents.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after SUNY-CSI's determination, they may appeal to the New York State Board of Regents through the New York State Education Department:

New York State Education Department
Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue, Room 5N Mezzanine
Albany, NY 12234