



HAVEN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL COMPLAINT POLICY

When misunderstandings or disputes arise in the school community, it is important that they be resolved before serious problems develop. The school has adopted the following policies and procedures for informal and formal complaints.

Informal Complaints

Complaints that do not involve violations of the charter of Haven Charter High School (“HCHS”) are defined as informal complaints. Faculty, staff, and other members of the school community are encouraged to try to resolve their difficulties among themselves first. If you have a complaint, you are encouraged to contact the appropriate staff member at HCHS by telephone or email or by scheduling a meeting to discuss the complaint in person. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to informal complaints, either in person, by telephone or in writing (electronic or otherwise).

If an informal complaint is not responded to and resolved promptly or satisfactorily, you may contact the Principal or Executive Director to discuss the matter. The Principal or Executive Director shall review the complaint and promptly respond to the complaint either in person, by telephone or in writing (electronic or otherwise). If you are not satisfied with the outcome or decision pertaining to the complaint and your complaint alleges a violation of HCHS’s charter or applicable law, you may file a formal complaint in writing to HCHS’s Board of Trustees in accordance with the procedures set forth below.

Decisions regarding informal complaints cannot be appealed to the SUNY Charter School Institute.
of law

Formal Complaints

In accordance with requirements of § 2855(4) of the Education Law, any individual or group may bring a complaint directly to HCHS’s Board of Trustees alleging a violation of HCHS’s charter or any provision of law relating to the management or operation of the school. This is defined as a formal complaint.

Examples of formal complaints are:

- Improper discipline of a special education student (violates IDEA)
- Billing the wrong district for a student (violation of Charter Schools Act)
- Student abuse in the school (violation of New York State law)



HCHS prefers that complainants voluntarily first use the informal complaint process describe above to attempt to try to resolve their concerns with school management before bringing it to the attention of the Board of Trustees. However, nothing in this policy should be interpreted as preventing the submission of a formal complaint directly to the Board of Trustees. The formal complaint process should follow these steps:

1. Complainant submits a formal complaint to the Chair of the Board of Trustees in writing, specific emails, letters and text. The contact information for the Chair of the Board of Trustees can be obtained by calling or emailing HCHS's main office or at the email address included on the school's website. The complaint should state the date of the complaint, a detailed statement of the circumstances, and the requested remedy. The Board will acknowledge receipt of said complaint within five business days.
2. The Chair of the Board will appoint a Grievance Committee composed solely of board members to investigate the complaint. The Grievance Committee will complete its work within 30 business days of the Board receiving the complaint and present its findings and recommendations to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
3. The Board will affirm or amend the Grievance Committee recommendation and shall, as necessary, direct the Principal and/or other responsible party to act upon the complaint and report to the Board. The Board shall render a determination in writing and clearly set forth the reasoning of the Board's decision.
4. Any individual dissatisfied with the response of the Board of Trustees may appeal such a decision, provided the complaint alleges a violation of the charter, charter law or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of HCHS, to SUNY's Charter Schools Institute ("CSI"). A copy of the CSI's grievance policies are available at its website (<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/contact/>).
5. Any individual dissatisfied with the response of CSI may bring a further complaint which alleges a violation of the charter, charter law or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of HCHS to the Board of Regents.

The complainant's right to a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint will not be affected by the complainant's pursuit of other remedies, such as the filing of a complaint with any outside entity.