

Barack H. Obama Elementary School

IB PYP Parent/Guardian/Student Concern and Complaint Procedure (revised 5/2023)

Purpose

As an IB World School, Barack H. Obama Elementary School (the school) regularly updates families and students about the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) offered at the school (Coherent curriculum 3.1, 3.3, 3.5). This includes published program material, email and print communications, information on the school website, and events providing information on the PYP curriculum and implementation. The school is committed to consulting, informing, and engaging learning community stakeholders in IB PYP decision-making at the school level.

The school recognizes being a lifelong, internationally minded learner involves willingness to listen to questions and feedback. The choice to respond positively if concerns and complaints arise can lead to improvement and growth in school practices. To this end, the learning community strives to resolve concerns and complaints at the earliest possible stage and with the individual(s) directly involved.

Scope

Any school stakeholder may bring forth concerns or complaints. However, it is expected this procedure will primarily be used by families and students. The term 'parent/guardian/student' used throughout this document references any individual bringing forth a concern or complaint about the PYP at the school.

This document outlines the procedure **specifically addressing concerns or complaints about the IB PYP curriculum framework and/or implementation at the school.** This procedure does not replace or supersede any policy or procedure developed by Jackson Public Schools. For complaints outside the scope of this policy (e.g., student discipline, discrimination, admissions decisions, attendance, district assessment procedures, district grading and reporting procedures, exceptional education services, etc.) make direct contact with the principal.

Definitions

- A **concern** is defined as a question or statement of worry or doubt over an issue for which reassurance is sought.
- A **formal complaint** is defined as a written statement of dissatisfaction about actions taken or a lack of action by the school.

Procedures for Concerns and Complaints

Procedures for both informal concerns and formal complaints are described below. For effective and timely resolution, concerns and complaints should be raised within two weeks of the issue in question. Staff members have 48 business hours to acknowledge receipt of an informal concern or formal complaint.

Informal Concern Procedure

Individuals with concerns are encouraged to discuss the matter with the person involved as soon as possible.

- A concern related to IB PYP classroom content (e.g., topics of study, student inquiries, assignments, etc.) should first be addressed to the homeroom or special subject teacher.
- A concern related to overall IB PYP implementation at the school can be discussed with the PYP coordinator or principal.

A parent/guardian/student may raise an informal concern directly with a teacher, the PYP coordinator, and/or the principal. Informal concerns may be voiced orally or in writing. At this stage, the parent/guardian/student may be seeking information, clarifying a situation, or determining whether to make a formal complaint. At this stage, the goal is to support stakeholder understanding of the nature of the IB PYP and resolve the concern through open and respectful dialogue.

Students may choose to first discuss concerns with the school counselor. The school counselor will assist the student with self-advocacy strategies and support the student in approaching the teacher, principal or IB PYP coordinator to seek resolution.

Staff are encouraged to document conversations regarding the informal parent/guardian/student concern, noting information sought, clarifications provided, and any agreed upon resolution. School Status, contact log entry, email, and/or written conference notes are appropriate documentation for informal concerns. The staff member addressing the informal concern will file the documentation for the remainder of the school year.

Formal complaint procedure

If an informal concern is not resolved, the parent/guardian/student may choose to make a formal complaint. The steps in the formal complaint procedure are as follows.

1. Complete the IB PYP formal complaint form (see page 3), giving details of the issue and efforts to resolve this issue.
2. Email or deliver the completed formal complaint form to the attention of the principal.
3. The principal (or designee) will review and discuss the formal complaint with relevant individuals. The PYP coordinator will clarify related PYP requirements and guidelines. Involved teachers will be asked to share their perspective. The parent/guardian/student may be contacted for additional information.
4. Conclusions of the formal complaint review, including what action, if any, will be taken, will be communicated in writing (email or hard copy) to the parent/guardian/student.
5. Documentation of the formal complaint review and conclusion will be filed in the school office.
6. If the parent/guardian/student is dissatisfied with the conclusion of the formal complaint review, they may contact the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education, Division 1.

Concern and Complaint Procedure Review:

The concern and complaint procedure is reviewed every two years in the first semester of the school year and in preparation for program evaluation. During the review period, updates to IBO programme documentation are reviewed, and all stakeholders are invited to provide feedback. The pedagogical leadership team considers both inputs and revises the procedure as appropriate.

The policy is highlighted each fall to promote continued awareness for students, parents, staff, and other community members. The concern and complaint procedure can be accessed digitally on the school website and in print in the library/media center.

Last revised - May 2023

