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105 Grievance/Whistle Blower Policy

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It is TRM's goal as an employer to provide the best possible environment for all staff and the school community as a whole. Also, for staff and members to be comfortable enough to openly discuss issues or problems and know they will be taken seriously. TRM is committed to treating each employee as an individual. TRM seeks to develop a spirit of teamwork; individuals working together to maintain the best school possible. TRM provides a fair and equitable workplace to ensure an atmosphere where these goals are accomplished.

Most importantly, TRM is a workplace where communication is open and problems are discussed and resolved in a respectful atmosphere. TRM firmly believes that with direct communication, employees can resolve difficulties or disagreements that may arise and maintain a respectful and productive working relationship. TRM demands the highest ethical performance from its director, staff and Board. As employees and representatives of TRM, all employees and volunteers must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling the school's responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

TRM also strives to ensure that its workplace and equipment are maintained so as to provide a safe environment for its students, staff, visitors and volunteers. Further, TRM will continually look for ways to improve and evolve to provide a safe and unique learning environment. TRM will remain open to employees' ideas and suggestions.

Should an employee have a complaint/grievance we ask, that whenever possible, he or she follow the steps outlined here:

Step 1: Review

Review the complaint as quickly as possible with the other staff member. Make sure you fully understand the complaint and clarify the problem with the employee.

Make sure the complaint is documented in writing identifying areas for concern and any witnesses.

Try to solve the problem informally with staff if this approach is appropriate.

Make sure the complainant knows that while you will attempt to keep the issues confidential this may not be possible as the steps continue.

Step 2: Formal Investigation

Initiated by the Executive Director and investigated as standard procedure.

If the Executive Director determines the issue cannot be solved informally, you will need to begin a formal investigation.

The employee will be made aware of how long this will take and the next steps so they are sure their complaint is being handled properly.

The Executive Director will gather all the information needed regarding the complaint. This may include statements and documentation from everyone involved.

To remember:

- The investigator must stay impartial and only document the facts, not personal views.
- The complainant will be kept updated at all stages so they are clear how everything is being handled and know what to expect next.

Step 3: Meeting

After the investigation has taken place, a meeting will need to be arranged with the complaining employee.

The employee will be encouraged to discuss their complaint objectively, to keep emotions in check and to encourage a problem solving approach.

The investigator will need to inform the employee of the outcome of the investigation and confirm this in writing and ensure any recommendations are actioned.

The Executive Director may advise the complainant of any recommendations but you shouldn't discuss any action that has been taken against any other employees i.e. disciplinary.

Step 4: Appeal

If the employee does not feel the outcome of the complaint is sufficient, they may be given the opportunity to appeal. If they wish to appeal, this should be confirmed in writing, bear in mind that it is not legally necessary for them to explain why they are appealing the decision.

Best practice stipulates an appeal hearing should have a more senior member of staff involved. The employee has the right to be accompanied during this meeting.

After the meeting, the employee should be made aware of the outcome in writing.

Parties should bear in mind that complaints don't always end in dissatisfied employees who appeal and can often be addressed in a comfortable manner with an agreed outcome that leaves both the complainant and investigator satisfied.

If a TRM staff member has a complaint regarding the Executive Director, a similar process would ensue. The employee would first meet with the Director to see if the problem can be solved informally. The office manager's presence can be requested in any informal meetings. Then the process outlined in steps 2-4 would be followed under the hiring committees supervision and guidance.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY:

It is the responsibility of all employees and the Executive Director to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Grievance/Whistle Blower Policy.

GUIDELINES:

The term whistleblower refers to a director or employee who, in good faith, reports an ethics violation.

No Retaliations: No whistleblower shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against someone who has

reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. The Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within TRM prior to seeking resolution outside TRM.

Reporting Violations: TRM encourages employees to bring their questions, suggestions and complaints to the attention of the Executive Director. TRM will carefully consider each of these in its continuing effort to improve operations.

- If an employee feels (s)he has a problem, present the situation to his/her immediate supervisor so that the problem can be settled by examination and discussion of the facts. TRM hopes that your immediate supervisor is able to satisfactorily resolve most matters.
- If (s)he still has questions after meeting with the immediate supervisor or if (s)he would like further clarification on the matter, request a meeting with the school director. (S)he will review the issues and meet with the employee to discuss possible solutions.
- Finally, if the employee still believes that his/her problem has not been fairly or fully addressed, request a meeting with any member of the Board of Directors.
- Employee suggestions and comments on any subject are important, and TRM encourages employees to take every opportunity to discuss them with the school. Employees' jobs will not be adversely affected in any way because (s)he chose to use this procedure.

Acting in Good Faith: Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality: Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations: The Director or School Board Chairperson will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.