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**Section 504 and Title IX**

Sussex Montessori School is an Equal Opportunity Employer, which encourages applications from minority group members, women, individuals with disabilities and veterans.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE TO ADDRESS SECTION 504 and Title IX DISCRIMINATION**

The Section 504 and Title IX Compliance Officers’ responsibilities include overseeing all complaints of discrimination, identifying, and addressing any patterns or systemic problems that arise during the review of such complaints.

Sussex Montessori School strives to provide an environment free from discrimination.  The school encourages students, parents, and staff to identify barriers to a discrimination-free and appropriate learning environment at all times. Any employee, parent/guardian of a student enrolled in Sussex Montessori School may file a grievance if he/she believes they or their child has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability by students, employees, or third parties.  All grievances will be received and investigated in a fair and expeditious manner.

**Steps to Resolution**

**Step 1**:  The best solutions to parent/student concerns often occur at the school level.  Therefore, Sussex Montessori encourages parents/students to attempt to resolve concerns by working with the Head of School or other appropriate building staff to reach a joint resolution of the issue.  Contact the Head of School to arrange a meeting or to discuss the complaint.

**Step 2**:  If the issue is not resolved at the school level, the Sussex Montessori Grievance Form shall be submitted to the school board or Title IX Compliance Officer (or designee) within 180 calendar days of the alleged violation to request a hearing.  The Compliance Officer will be independent and impartial.  If he or she has prior knowledge of the situation, an independent and impartial designee shall be appointed.  He or she will thoroughly and diligently investigate the circumstances of the concern, obtain information as to relevant witnesses and evidence, obtain all relevant evidence, hear equally from the grievant’ s witnesses, and other witnesses, equally review all evidence from the grievant and accused and interview and obtain statements from all relevant witnesses, and then present a report of his or her finding of fact and conclusions within 30 business days.  The investigation will be adequate and reliable.  The report of his or her findings shall be sent to the parties upon completion.  The complaint should be sent to:

**Title IX – Coordinator Section 504-Coordinator**

Lisa Coldiron – Head of School (Nurse and/or Guidance Counselor)

24960 Dairy Lane

Seaford, DE 19930

302.404.5367

The Sussex Montessori Grievance Form must be completed with all information listed below and signed by the grievant.

* the child’s name, date of birth, address;
* complainant’s name, address and phone number;
* complainant’s relationship to the child (parent, guardian, surrogate);
* name, address, and phone number of the person representing complainant (if complainant has someone);
* decision of the school with which complainant disagrees and the reason;
* date complainant received this decision; and
* complainant’s signature.

**Step 3:** The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the School’s Section 504 Compliance Officer or the Title IX Compliance Officer to the board chair (or designee) within 10 days of receiving the Compliance Officer’s decision.  The board chair (or designee) shall review all statements and evidence as well as the Compliance Officer’s report (or designee’s report), gather such additional evidence as deemed necessary, and then issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.

* In the event there is a finding of discrimination, the School shall take remedial efforts and efforts to prevent recurrence and shall make all reasonable efforts to correct the discriminatory effects of a prohibited action.
* Any party aggrieved shall have the right to file a formal complaint after Board Chair’s decision (or designee’s decision) with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Office for Civil Rights, Philadelphia
U.S. Department of Education
The Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East, Suite 515
Philadelphia, PA  19107
Tel:  (215)656-8541
Fax:  (215)656-8605
Email:  OCR.Philadelphia@ed.gov

OCR Electronic Complaint Form:  <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>