

State of California

EDUCATION CODE

Section 35186

35186. (a) A school district shall use the uniform complaint process it has adopted as required by Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, with modifications, as necessary, to help identify and resolve any deficiencies related to instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health and safety of pupils or staff, and teacher vacancy or misassignment.

(1) A complaint may be filed anonymously. A complainant who identifies himself or herself is entitled to a response if he or she indicates that a response is requested. A complaint form shall include a space to mark to indicate whether a response is requested. If Section 48985 is otherwise applicable, the response, if requested, and report shall be written in English and the primary language in which the complaint was filed. All complaints and responses are public records.

(2) The complaint form shall specify the location for filing a complaint. A complainant may add as much text to explain the complaint as he or she wishes.

(3) A complaint shall be filed with the principal of the school or his or her designee. A complaint about problems beyond the authority of the school principal shall be forwarded in a timely manner but not to exceed 10 working days to the appropriate school district official for resolution.

(b) The principal or the designee of the district superintendent, as applicable, shall make all reasonable efforts to investigate any problem within his or her authority. The principal or designee of the district superintendent shall remedy a valid complaint within a reasonable time period but not to exceed 30 working days from the date the complaint was received. The principal or designee of the district superintendent shall report to the complainant the resolution of the complaint within 45 working days of the initial filing. If the principal makes this report, the principal shall also report the same information in the same timeframe to the designee of the district superintendent.

(c) A complainant not satisfied with the resolution of the principal or the designee of the district superintendent has the right to describe the complaint to the governing board of the school district at a regularly scheduled hearing of the governing board of the school district. As to complaints involving a condition of a facility that poses an emergency or urgent threat, as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 17592.72, a complainant who is not satisfied with the resolution proffered by the principal or the designee of the district superintendent has the right to file an appeal to the Superintendent, who shall provide a written report to the state board describing the basis for the complaint and, as appropriate, a proposed remedy for the issue described in the complaint.

(d) A school district shall report summarized data on the nature and resolution of all complaints on a quarterly basis to the county superintendent of schools and the governing board of the school district. The summaries shall be publicly reported on a quarterly basis at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing board of the school district. The report shall include the number of complaints by general subject area with the number of resolved and unresolved complaints. The complaints and written responses shall be available as public records.

(e) The procedure required pursuant to this section is intended to address all of the following:

(1) A complaint related to instructional materials as follows:

(A) A pupil, including an English learner, does not have standards-aligned textbooks or instructional materials or state-adopted or district-adopted textbooks or other required instructional material to use in class.

(B) A pupil does not have access to instructional materials to use at home or after school.

(C) Textbooks or instructional materials are in poor or unusable condition, have missing pages, or are unreadable due to damage.

(2) A complaint related to teacher vacancy or misassignment as follows:

(A) A semester begins and a teacher vacancy exists.

(B) A teacher who lacks credentials or training to teach English learners is assigned to teach a class with more than 20 percent of English learner pupils in the class. This subparagraph does not relieve a school district from complying with state or federal law regarding teachers of English learners.

(C) A teacher is assigned to teach a class for which the teacher lacks subject matter competency.

(3) A complaint related to the condition of facilities that pose an emergency or urgent threat to the health or safety of pupils or staff as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 17592.72 and any other emergency conditions the school district determines appropriate and the requirements established pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 35292.5.

(f) In order to identify appropriate subjects of complaint, a notice shall be posted in each classroom in each school in the school district notifying parents, guardians, pupils, and teachers of the following:

(1) There should be sufficient textbooks and instructional materials. For there to be sufficient textbooks and instructional materials each pupil, including English learners, must have a textbook or instructional materials, or both, to use in class and to take home.

(2) School facilities must be clean, safe, and maintained in good repair.

(3) There should be no teacher vacancies or misassignments as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (h).

(4) The location at which to obtain a form to file a complaint in case of a shortage. Posting a notice downloadable from the Internet Web site of the department shall satisfy this requirement.

(g) A local educational agency shall establish local policies and procedures, post notices, and implement this section.

(h) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) “Good repair” has the same meaning as specified in subdivision (d) of Section 17002.

(2) “Misassignment” means the placement of a certificated employee in a teaching or services position for which the employee does not hold a legally recognized certificate or credential or the placement of a certificated employee in a teaching or services position that the employee is not otherwise authorized by statute to hold.

(3) “Teacher vacancy” means a position to which a single designated certificated employee has not been assigned at the beginning of the year for an entire year or, if the position is for a one-semester course, a position to which a single designated certificated employee has not been assigned at the beginning of a semester for an entire semester.

(Amended by Stats. 2015, Ch. 538, Sec. 8. (SB 416) Effective January 1, 2016.)