

INVESTIGATIONS

GENERAL INVESTIGATIONS

Concerns about serious situations or conditions within the school system should be reported to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Should the Superintendent determine that the situation/condition warrants investigation, he/she shall have the matter investigated by appointing appropriate staff personnel (one or more persons) to make the necessary inquiries. At the conclusion of their investigation, a report shall be prepared for submission to the Superintendent.

No School Board member shall participate in any investigation undertaken in the school system.

In any investigation into incidents involving accidents or injuries to students or employees, or involving student misconduct, or the competence, honesty or performance of duties of employees, all employees of the Zachary Community School Board shall, upon reasonable request by the Superintendent or his/her designee, give a statement of the facts and circumstances within the employee's knowledge, or an accounting of the employee's conduct concerning the circumstances which are the subject of the investigation or are related to the matter being investigated.

If deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his/her designee in the conduct of such investigation, employees shall, upon reasonable notification, appear at the offices of the Superintendent or at such other suitable location within the parish as might be appropriate and convenient in the investigation.

During any such employee interview, the employee may have legal representation if desired by the employee, but said representation shall be at no cost to the Zachary Community School Board.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

The Zachary Community School Board, in accordance with state law, shall initiate an investigation of an employee, in cases where the School Board has made a public announcement that an employee may be disciplined, whether or not there is an accompanying reduction in pay. The investigation shall proceed as outlined below under *Investigation Procedures*. Not later than thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the investigation and prior to any School Board action to implement such disciplinary action, the employee may appear, if he/she so determines, before the School Board in open session and be given a reasonable time, as determined by the School Board, to comment on the investigation and any actions taken or proposed to be taken involving the employee.

These provisions shall not be applicable to any reduction in force initiated by the School Board.

IMPERMISSIBLE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OR MORAL OFFENSES

If an employee is accused of impermissible corporal punishment, or of a moral offense involving a student, a prompt, thorough investigation shall be conducted by the Superintendent or designee. The investigation shall proceed as outlined below under *Investigation Procedures*. A written report of the results of the investigation shall be prepared, and the employee shall be provided with a copy of such report. The Superintendent may promulgate such administrative regulations and procedures as he/she deems necessary to implement this policy. Any employee found to have violated the provisions of School Board policy shall be disciplined by such means as appropriate to the incident, including reprimand, suspension, termination, and/or referral to the local child protection agency/law enforcement.

If the allegation falls within the definition of *abuse* as defined in state law, then all school employees with knowledge of such incidents become *mandatory reporters* and the allegations must be reported to child protection or law enforcement as provided by state law and School Board policy (see policy *JGCE, Child Abuse*). Such reporting shall be made and applied in conjunction with the procedures outlined in this policy.

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT INVESTIGATIONS

Any investigation of sexual harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Part 106 of Title 34 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures developed and maintained by the Superintendent or his/her designee under the provisions of policy *JAAA, Title IX Sexual Harassment*.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Notwithstanding any statute or other School Board policy, any complaint relative to employee conduct shall be handled as follows:

1. The Superintendent or his/her designee may order such investigation to be conducted in each instance as is warranted by the circumstances, and shall conduct an investigation when required by law or School Board policy.
2. The investigation shall be conducted by the Superintendent or his/her designee. These rules contemplate informal but thorough investigations, affording all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. Staff members or students may be interviewed if it is deemed essential to the investigation.

3. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall confer with each accused employee's immediate supervisor concerning the results of the investigation and the immediate supervisor shall discuss the matter with the employee.
4. A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Superintendent or his/her designee and a copy forwarded to the complainant no later than (30) days after its filing.
5. If a complaint is substantiated, the Superintendent shall consider appropriate disciplinary action which may be taken in accordance with School Board policy, which may include termination. Any disciplinary action shall be placed in the offender's personnel file which will reflect the action taken and the grounds thereof.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The School Board shall attempt to protect the privacy of the complainant and the respondent, but confidentiality is not guaranteed. Information regarding the complaint and identities of complainants, respondents, and witnesses may be revealed as permitted or required by law, and as is necessary to conduct the investigation and enforce the consequences of the investigation.

Revised: September, 2009

Revised: September 13, 2012

Revised: August 4, 2020

Ref: 34 CFR 106 et seq. (*Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:403, 17:81, 17:81.6, 17:81.8, 17:223; Board minutes, 9-24-09, 9-13-12, 8-4-20.