

Parent/Community Grievance Policy



ZHS Policy ID: PG14

Related Regulations:	HS Act 642 (c)(1)(E)(iv)(X)(bb); HSPPS 1302.23 (c)(1-4);		
Revised by:	Tari Wolfe	Revision Date:	5/10/2024
Approved by:	ZHS Policy Council	Approval Date:	5/24/2024
Approved by:	LDF Tribal Council	Approval Date:	6/24/2024
Related Forms:	Grievance Form – paper and electronic ChildPlus version		

Mission Statement: It is the mission of Zaasijiwan Head Start to demonstrate a commitment to children and families to ensure they have the resources and opportunities to succeed. This is accomplished through direct services in the home and the center, the educational and empowerment process, and through working in partnership with existing community agencies.

Performance Objective: In accordance with the applicable regulations denoted in the table above which requires programs to establish procedures to handle parent requests for hearings and any other parent/community grievance(s) brought forth.

Communication Expectations: Zaasijiwan Head Start (ZHS) encourages parent and/or community input regarding our program and the methods in which it operates. The program provides varied opportunities for participants and community members to provide input and feedback.

That said, if you have any concerns/complaints, we expect you communicate them verbally and directly to your child’s teacher or the appropriate member of the administrative team (e.g. talk to the HS Education Manager for a Head Start classroom concern) during regular office and/or classroom hours to have your concerns resolved. ZHS employees are responsible for documenting these conversations in our information management system (ChildPlus) so a record is available for reference if needed.

If your concern relates to the violation of a law, danger to a child, or a serious safety risk, please forego Communication Expectations and the Grievance Policy and bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Program Director soon as you are able. If the Program Director is unavailable, report to another administrative staff member.

Grievance Policy: If you have a concern that is unable to be addressed by employing the communication guidelines indicated above, you may elect to move onto the grievance process. If choosing to engage in this process, please be advised that no concern/complaint over 90 days old will be considered. Parent & Community Grievance forms are available upon request.

Procedures for parents, program participants, and community members to communicate grievances or concerns with ZHS programming or other actions are as follows:

1. **Filing Procedures:** To file a formal grievance, complete the Parent & Community Grievance form or submit your concern in writing. Provide a preferred contact method, details explaining the nature of your concern and/or reason for complaint, names of involved parties and/or witnesses, and the date and time or timeline of the incident(s). Submit via email, fax, or regular postal mail. If choosing postal mail, allow for longer response times. If it is helpful, you may also phone in the concern/complaint and request a staff person to assist with completing the form and forwarding it to the appropriate

- administrative staff member for follow-up. If assistance is requested, allow additional time for follow-up procedures to begin.
2. Follow-Up Procedures: Once an administrative staff member receives a grievance, they will notify the ZHS Program Director and efforts will be made to contact the concerned individual within 2 business days. At a minimum, the receiving staff person will be in contact within 5 working days. The initial follow-up will be focused on verifying information provided and gathering additional information needed to work toward addressing the grievance.
 3. Resolution Procedures: The administrative team, with the involvement of the ZHS Program Director, will take steps to resolve the concern and contact you within 2 working days of the initial follow-up call to discuss findings and the proposed resolution.
 - A. If you are satisfied that your concern/complaint will be or has been resolved, no further action is needed. ZHS staff will document the proposed resolution, your agreement, and close the matter.
 - B. If you are not satisfied, please clearly communicate your dissatisfaction and intent to have the grievance addressed at a higher level. If you do not express your intent to move the grievance forward, your dissatisfaction will be documented and the matter will be closed.
 - C. Once a desire to file the grievance has been expressed, follow up procedures will commence.
 4. Follow-Up Procedures for Unresolved Concerns/Complaints: The ZHS Program Director will engage the ZHS Policy Council President or delegate to assess reasonableness of the grievance. Every effort will be made to ensure a decision is made and communicated via the petitioner's preferred contact method within 3 business days of receipt.
 - A. If the grievance is determined to be answered by previous action or unanswerable, the petitioner will be notified in writing of its dismissal. No further action will be taken.
 - B. If the grievance is determined reasonable, the ZHS Program Director and Policy Council President or delegate will form a Grievance Panel consisting of 2 Policy Council members and a Tribal Liaison (HR staff person, Tribal Administrator or Council Member) to consider the concerns raised in the grievance and attempts to resolve. Efforts will be made to assemble this panel and notify the petitioner within 5 business days.
 - C. Upon notification of the formation of the Grievance Panel, the petitioner has the opportunity to disclose any conflict of interest concerns and if necessary to request that substitution of a panel member is made.
 - D.
 5. Hearing Procedures: Once assembled, the ZHS Policy Council President and Grievance Panel will review the concern(s) and any action taken in an attempt to achieve resolution. A panel member will be responsible for contacting and scheduling a meeting with the petitioner. The meeting will occur within 10 working days.
 - A. In the interim, the panel may elect to conduct interviews with the individual that filed the grievances as well as other concerned individuals.
 - B. The panel, at its discretion and if available, may request the participation of a consultant and/or professional mediator.

- C. Discussion will be heard only on the issues listed in the grievance. Discussion may be limited by panel members to maintain a reasonable meeting duration.
 - D. The order of the meeting will be as follows:
 - a. Written grievance will be introduced by Policy Council President or delegate.
 - b. Petitioner will be heard.
 - c. Defendant, if applicable, will be heard.
 - d. Rebuttal by petitioner, if applicable.
 - e. Rebuttal by defendant, if applicable.
 - f. Follow-up questions from panel, if applicable.
 - g. Panel votes by closed session. (ZHS Policy Council President/delegate is a non-voting member.)
 - h. Decision is rendered.
 - E. ZHS Policy Council President/delegate is responsible for notification to interested parties within 3 business days of the conclusion of the hearing. Decisions of the ZHS Grievance Panel are final with the exception of decisions affecting staff employment which are referred back to the ZHS Program Director and/or Policy Council with Grievance Panel recommendations.
6. Other Considerations: These policies and procedures deal with parent, participant, and community complaints only. They exclude any grievances made by current and/or former ZHS employee regarding a personnel issue. Current ZHS employees are required to follow procedures listed in the Employee Handbook.

LDF Zaasijiwan Head Start

Parent/Community Communication Form

Name of Petitioner: _____

Relation to ZHS (ex: parent, community member, other): _____

Name of Child (if applicable): _____

Name of Witnesses (if applicable): _____

Name of Employee Recording Concern (if applicable): _____

Please provide details relevant to the concern/complaint you are bringing forth. Include date, time (use best estimate), person(s) involved, _____

Provide details on any prior attempts made to communicate and/or resolve the concern(s) presented. _____

Describe any actions taken to follow-up or resolve the issue and who was responsible (yourself, ZHS employee). _____

List any suggestions you have for resolving the issue. _____

Move to grievance process? _____

Preferred contact method: _____

ZHS Contact Information
Email: twolfe@ldftribe.com
Date Received: _____

Fax: (715) 588-9576
Receiver: _____

Mail: P.O. Box 67
Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538