



ALLEGIANCE STEAM ACADEMY UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES POLICY

The governing board (“Board”) of Allegiance STEAM Academy (“ASA”) is committed to compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs and activities. Most issues are best handled informally, and the Board encourages the early resolution of complaints at the site level whenever possible. If you have a concern, you can always come and talk to one of us. If you find that for some reason this informal resolution is not adequate, you can follow our formal complaint policy and procedure set out herein.

ASA developed this Uniform Complaint Procedures Policy (“UCP”) in accordance with Title 5, California Code of Regulations, §§ 4600-4687. ASA has primary responsibility to ensure its compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and ASA will investigate and seek to resolve UCP complaints in accordance with this UCP. The Board approved the UCP and this UCP applies to all ASA schools.

UCP Complaints

Not all complaints fall under the scope of the UCP. Complaints arising from the employment relationship are separately addressed by ASA’s employment policies. Many concerns, including classroom assignments, grades, graduation requirements, hiring and evaluation of staff, homework policies and practices, student advancement and retention, student discipline, student records, the Brown Act, and other general education requirements, are *not* UCP complaints. ASA, however, may use these complaint procedures to address complaints not covered by the UCP in its sole discretion. Only allegations within the subject matters falling within the UCP can be appealed to the CDE.

A UCP complaint is a written and signed statement alleging a violation of federal or state laws or regulations, which may include: complaints regarding certain programs and activities (list below); complaints alleging the charging of pupil fees for participation in an educational activity; complaints regarding non-compliance with the requirements of ASA’s Local Control and Accountability Plans (“LCAP”); or an allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in certain programs or activities.

Complaints Regarding Programs and Activities

According to state and federal codes and regulations, the programs and activities subject to the UCP are:

- Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Pupils
- Adult Education
- After School Education and Safety
- Agricultural Career Technical Education
- Career Technical and Technical Education, Career Technical, Technical Training (state)
- Career Technical Education (federal)
- Child Care and Development Programs
- Compensatory Education
- Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation and/or Bullying of any protected group as identified in Education Code §§ 200 and 220 and Government Code § 11135, including actual or perceived characteristics set forth in Penal Code § 422.55, based on sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race or ethnicity, ethnic group identification, ancestry, nationality, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, age, immigration status, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any program or activity conducted by ASA which is funded directly by, or that received or benefits from, any state financial assistance
- Consolidated Categorical Aid Programs
- Course Periods without Educational Content
- Education and Graduation requirements of Pupils in Foster Care, Homeless Pupils, former Juvenile Court Pupils, and Pupils of Military Families
- Every Student Succeeds Act
- Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP)
- Migrant Education
- Physical Education Instructional Minutes
- Pupil Fees, which includes a purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment or clothes associated with an educational activity
- Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil
- Regional Occupational Centers and Programs
- School Plans for Student Achievement
- School Safety Plans
- School Site Councils
- State Preschool
- State Preschool Health and Safety Issues in LEAs Exempt from Licensing
- Any other state or federal educational program the State Superintendent of Public Instruction or the California Department of Education or designee deems appropriate

The UCP Annual Notice

ASA provides notice of this UCP on an annual basis. The notice addresses all students, employees, parents or guardians, school advisory committee members, appropriate private school officials or representatives (if applicable), and other interested parties. The notice includes information regarding allegations about discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. It lists all federal and state programs within the scope of the UCP. It lists the position at ASA who is responsible for and knowledgeable about processing UCP complaints. ASA's annual UCP notice is in English. If 15% or more of students enrolled at ASA speak a single primary language other than English, the annual notice will be provided in that language as well pursuant to Education Code § 48985.

Designation of Responsible Employee

ASA's Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") is the employee responsible for receiving, investigating and responding to UCP complaints (the "Responsible Employee"):

Board Approved: May 5, 2022

Sebastian Cognaetta, CEO
Allegiance STEAM Academy
5862 C Street
Chino, CA 91710
909-465-5405
sebastian.cognaetta@asathrive.org

In no instance will the Responsible Employee be assigned to investigate a complaint in which he or she has a bias that would prohibit them from fairly investigating or responding to the complaint. Any complaint against Responsible Employee or that raises a concern about Responsible Employee's ability to investigate the complaint fairly and without bias should be referred to ASA's Principal or other appropriate ASA official, who will determine how the complaint will be investigated.

ASA will ensure that the Responsible Employee (or designee) investigating the complaint is knowledgeable about the laws and programs at issue in the complaint. ASA may consult with legal counsel as appropriate.

Confidentiality and Non-Retaliation

ASA will ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation and that the identity of a complainant alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying remains confidential as appropriate.

Complaint Procedures

Step 1: Filing a UCP Complaint

A UCP complaint must be filed according to the procedures set forth herein.

Any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization, may file a UCP complaint. However, a complaint filed on behalf of a student may only be filed by that student or that student's duly authorized representative.

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be filed by a person who alleges that he or she personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to the same.

A UCP complaint is written and signed. If a complainant is unable to put their complaint in writing due to a disability or illiteracy, ASA will assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint. A signature on a UCP complaint may be handwritten, typed (including in an email), or electronically-generated. Complaints related to pupil fees and/or LCAPs may be filed

anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance.

Complainants are encouraged, but not required, to use the appropriate complaint form(s), attached. Complaints shall be filed with the Responsible Employee at the address provided herein. A pupil fees complaint may also be filed with ASA's Principal. The Responsible Employee will maintain a log of complaints and subsequent related actions to the extent required by oversight agencies.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Responsible Employee (or designee) will evaluate the complaint to determine whether it is subject to this UCP and will endeavor to notify the complainant within five (5) schooldays if the complaint is outside the jurisdiction of this UCP.

The Responsible Employee (or designee) may also determine if interim measures are necessary pending the result of an investigation. If interim measures are determined to be necessary, Responsible Employee (or designee) will consult with the Board President, Principal or designee, prior to implementing any such measures. The interim measures shall remain in place until the Responsible Employee (or designee) determines that they are no longer necessary or until ASA issues its final written Investigation Report, whichever occurs first.

Timing of Complaints and Investigation

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be filed no later than six (6) months from the date when the alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred or the complainant first obtained knowledge of it. The time for filing may be extended by the Responsible Employee (or designee) for good cause upon written request from the complainant. Such extension shall be in writing and may not exceed ninety (90) days following the expiration of the six-month period.

All other complaints shall be filed no later than one (1) year from the date the alleged violation occurred, except this one-year timeline shall not apply to complaints regarding the educational rights of foster youth as specified in 5 C.C.R. § 4630.5. For complaints regarding LCAP, the date of the alleged violation is the date when ASA's governing board approves the LCAP or annual update.

Unless a UCP complaint is resolved through mediation as set forth below, ASA will investigate the UCP complaint and issue a written Investigation Report to the complainant within sixty (60) days from the date of receipt of the complaint, unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of time.

Step 2: Mediation (Optional)

The Responsible Employee (or designee) and complainant may mutually agree to mediation. Any ASA employee or member of ASA's Board who has not been involved with the allegations in the complaint may be assigned by the Responsible Employee (or designee) to serve as

mediator. The mediator will arrange for both the complainant and ASA to present relevant evidence. The Responsible Employee (or designee) will inform the complainant that the mediation process may be terminated at any time by either ASA or complainant, in which case the complaint will proceed directly to an investigation. If mediation resolves the complaint to the satisfaction of both parties, ASA will implement any remedial measures and the complainant may choose to withdraw the complaint. If mediation does not resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of both parties or within the parameters of law, the Responsible Employee (or designee) shall proceed with their investigation of the complaint.

The use of mediation does not extend ASA's timelines for investigating and resolving the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to such an extension of time.

Step 3: Investigation of Complaint

In order to investigate the complaint, the Responsible Employee (or designee) shall have access to applicable ASA records and/or information related to the complaint allegations. As part of their investigation, the Responsible Employee (or designee) will do all of the following, in any order:

- Provide an opportunity for the complainant or complainant's representative and ASA's representative to present information relevant to the complaint or investigative process.
- Obtain statements from individuals/witnesses who can provide relevant information concerning the alleged violation.
- Review documents that may provide information relevant to the allegation.
- When necessary, seek clarification on specific complaint issues.

Refusal by the complainant or their representatives to provide the Responsible Employee (or designee) with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or failure or refusal to cooperate or obstruction of the investigation, may result in dismissal of complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegation.

Refusal by ASA to provide the Responsible Employee (or designee) with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or failure or refusal to cooperate or obstruction of the investigation, may result in a finding, based on evidence collected, that a violation has occurred and may result in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant.

Step 4: Final Written Decision (Investigation Report)

The Responsible Employee (or designee) shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the investigation and final decision (the "Investigation Report") within sixty (60) days of receipt of the complaint, unless complainant agrees to extend this date. ASA's Investigation

Report shall be written in English and, when required by law, in the complainant's primary language.

The Investigation Report shall include:

- The finding(s) of fact based on the evidence gathered;
- Conclusion providing a clear determination as to each allegation as to whether ASA is in compliance with the relevant law;
- If ASA finds merit in the complaint, the corrective actions required by law;
- Notice of the complainant's right to appeal ASA's Investigation Report to the CDE, except when ASA has used its UCP to address a non-UCP complaint; and
- Procedures to be followed for initiating an appeal to the CDE.

In addition, any Investigation Report on a complaint of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on state law shall include a notice that the complainant must wait until sixty (60) days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies.

An Investigation Report shall not include student information protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or any private employee personnel information, including but not limited to the nature of the disciplinary action taken against a student or employee. If a student or employee is disciplined as a result of the complaint, the Investigation Report shall simply state that effective action was taken and that the student or employee was informed of ASA's expectations.

If ASA finds merit in a complaint regarding pupil fees, physical education instructional minutes, or LCAP, the remedy will go to all affected students and parents/guardians. ASA, in good faith will engage in reasonable efforts to identify and fully reimburse all students, parents and guardians who paid any unlawful pupil fee within one (1) year prior to the filing of the complaint.

Appeal Process

A complainant may appeal ASA's Investigation Report by filing a written appeal within thirty (30) days of the date of the Investigation Report to the California Department of Education ("CDE"). This appeal to the CDE must specify and explain the basis for the appeal, including at least one of the following:

- ASA failed to follow its complaint procedures;
- Relative to the allegations of the complaint, the Investigation Report lacks material findings of fact necessary to reach a conclusion of law;

- The material findings of fact in the Investigation Report are not supported by substantial evidence;
- The legal conclusion in the Investigation Report is inconsistent with the law; and/or
- In a case in which ASA found noncompliance, the corrective actions fail to provide a proper remedy.

The appeal must be sent to CDE with: (1) a copy of the locally filed complaint; and (2) a copy of ASA's Investigation Report.

Appeals of decisions regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and regarding provision of accommodations to lactating students should be sent to:

California Department of Education
Education Equity UCP Appeals Office
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-319-8239

Appeals of decisions regarding LCAP should be sent to:

California Department of Education
Local Agency Systems Support Office
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-319-0809

Appeals of decisions regarding pupil fees or all other educational program complaints should be sent to:

California Department of Education
Categorical Programs Complaints Management Office
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-319-0929

The CDE may directly intervene in the complaint without waiting for action by ASA when one of the conditions listed in 5 C.C.R. § 4650 exists, including cases in which ASA has not taken action within sixty (60) days of the date the complaint was filed with ASA. A direct complaint to CDE must identify the basis for direct filing of the complaint, which must include evidence that supports such a basis.

Civil Law Remedies

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying laws. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders.

Uniform Complaint Procedures Form

Allegiance STEAM Academy has primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and shall investigate and seek to resolve complaints in accordance with the Uniform Complaint Procedures Policy (UCP). Please complete this form, providing as much information as possible and attaching any applicable supporting documentation, to assist in the investigation of your complaint.

Information

| | |
|---|------------------|
| NAME OF THE COMPLAINANT | ADDRESS |
| EMAIL ADDRESS | TELEPHONE NUMBER |
| COMPLAINANT WILL NEED THE ASSISTANCE OF AN INTERPRETER <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (<i>specify the language to be spoken by the interpreter</i>) | |
| COMPLAINANT IS A: <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Public Agency <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | |
| THIS COMPLAINT IS BEING FILED ON BEHALF OF: <input type="checkbox"/> Myself <input type="checkbox"/> A student (not the complainant named above) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>specify</i>) | |
| DATE OF ALLEGED VIOLATION | SCHOOL: |

Basis of Complaint

For allegations related to any of the following programs and activities subject to the UCP:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> After School Education and Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care and Development <input type="checkbox"/> Child Nutrition <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Categorical Aid <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, and/or Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Education for Foster Youth, Homeless Youth, Former Juvenile Court School Students, or Military Dependents <input type="checkbox"/> Every Student Succeeds Act (Titles I-VII) | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP) <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant Education <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil Fees <input type="checkbox"/> School Plans for Student Achievement <input type="checkbox"/> School Safety Plan <input type="checkbox"/> School Site Councils <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|--|---|

For complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, indicate the actual or perceived protected characteristics upon which the alleged conduct is based:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Race or ethnicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color | <input type="checkbox"/> Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Marital status | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nationality | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender identity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National origin | <input type="checkbox"/> Parental status | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender expression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration status | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical or mental disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic group identification | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received Received by Title

Investigator Outcome

Final written decision sent to complainant on Appeal filed with CDE? Yes No

Details of the Complaint

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. If you mention names, please also identify who they are (i.e. student, staff, parent, etc.). Attach additional pages, if necessary.

Provide the **facts** about your complaint:

List the **people** involved or impacted:

List any **witnesses** or individuals who may have knowledge of the alleged acts:

Provide and/or describe the specific **location(s)** where the incident(s) occurred:

List the **date(s) and time(s)** when the incident(s) occurred or when the alleged acts came to your attention:

Describe any **steps** you have taken to resolve this issue before filing the complaint. If applicable, list names and titles of school staff you have contacted:

Do you have any **written documents/ evidence** that may be relevant/supportive of your complaint?

- No Yes, copies of the documents/evidence are attached to this complaint

Signature of Complainant _____ Date _____

Allegiance STEAM Academy shall take steps to protect complainants from retaliation. Please file this complaint form and any additional documents in person, by mail, or via email with the following:

Sebastian Cогnetta, CEO
Allegiance STEAM Academy
5862 C Street Chino, CA 91710
sebastian.cognetta@asathrive.org

Board Approved: May 5, 2022