

## Federal Complaint Procedures

### A. Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization, or agency (“complainant”) may file a complaint with the Meriwether County School System (MCSS) if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that MCSS is violating a Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

### B. Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

1. Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies.
2. Title I, Part C: Education of Migrant Children.
3. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk.
4. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund.
5. Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education through Technology.
6. Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement.
7. Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income Schools.
8. Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children.
9. Title X, Part C – McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

### C. Complaints Originating at the Local Level

As part of its Assurances within ESEA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 within the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), an LEA accepting federal funds also agrees to adopt local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, for complaints originating at the local level, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve the issue through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with Meriwether County School System to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education with written proof of their attempt to resolve the issue with Meriwether County School System.

### D. Filing a Complaint

1. A complaint must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:
2. A statement that Meriwether County School System has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program.
3. The date on which the violation occurred.
4. The facts on which the statement is based, and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the federal statute or regulation).
5. A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.
6. Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency.
7. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant’s position.
8. The address of the complainant. The complaint must be addressed to:

*Ms. Dawn Woodard  
Federal Programs Director  
Meriwether County School System  
2100 Gaston Street  
Greenville, GA 30222*

Once the complaint is received by Meriwether County School System, it will be copied and forwarded to the appropriate Federal Program Manager.

## **E. Investigation of Complaint**

Within ten days of receipt of the complaint, Meriwether County School System (MCSS) will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant that contains the following information:

- The date the MCSS received the complaint.
- How the complainant may provide additional information.
- A statement of the ways in which MCSS may investigate or address the complaint.
- Any other pertinent information.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, MCSS will have 60 days from receipt of the information or completion of the investigation to issue a Letter of Findings.

If the Letter of Findings indicates that a violation has been found, corrective action will be required and timelines for completion will be included.

The 60-day timeline outlined above may be extended, if exceptional circumstances exist. The Letter of Findings will be sent directly to the complainant, as well as the other parties involved.

## **F. Right of Appeal**

If an individual, organization or agency is aggrieved by the final decision of Meriwether County School System, that individual, organization or agency has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education.

For complaints filed pursuant to Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503, a complainant may appeal to the Georgia Department of Education no later than 30 days from the date on which the complainant receives the Letter of Findings. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Meriwether County School Systems' decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Georgia Department of Education, Office of Legal Services  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE  
2052 Twin Tower East  
Atlanta, GA 30334

# Complaint Form for Federal Programs

*Please Print*

Name (Complainant): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (home): Phone Number (work): \_\_\_\_\_

Agency/agencies complaint is being filed against: \_\_\_\_\_

Date on which violation occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement that the Meriwether County School System has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation) (attach additional sheets if necessary):

The facts on which the statement is based, and the specific requirement allegedly violated (attach additional sheets if necessary):

List the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.

Has a complaint has been filed with any other government agency?    Yes    No

If so, provide the name of the agency. \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach/enclose copies of all applicable documents supporting your position.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

**Mail this form to:**

Ms. Dawn Woodard  
Federal Programs Director  
Meriwether County School System  
2100 Gaston Street  
Greenville, GA 30222