

# **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

## **Equity in Sports Complaints Procedure**

**IDFA**

**July 2001**

### **Procedures for Handling Complaints of Gender Discrimination in Violation of the Equity in Sports Act**

Complaints made to the Forsyth County School System regarding alleged violations of the Equity in Sports Act concerning discrimination on the basis of gender in any aspect of the interscholastic or intramural athletic programs offered by the school system will be processed in accordance with the following procedures.

1. A student or a parent or guardian on behalf of his/her minor child who is a student may file a complaint alleging a violation as described above by notifying, in writing, either the principal of the student's school or the sports equity coordinator designated for the school system. An appropriate complaint form may be obtained upon request if the complainant wishes to use one, but such form shall not be required. If the complaint is filed with a school principal, he or she shall be responsible for forwarding the complaint to the sports equity coordinator.
2. The sports equity coordinator shall have thirty (30) days after receipt of the written complaint to gather all information relevant to the complaint, review the information, determine the facts relative to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved, and render a decision in response to the complaint. The coordinator shall prepare a written decision, which shall include the essential facts and rationale for the decision.
3. The sports equity coordinator shall ensure that a copy of the decision is provided to the complainant within five (5) days of the date of the decision.
4. If, with regard to any specific complaint, the superintendent determines that there exists some conflict of interest or other reason why it would be appropriate to designate someone other than the sports equity coordinator to conduct the initial investigation required by these procedures, then the superintendent shall designate such person who shall stand in the place of and have the responsibilities of the sports equity coordinator during the handling of that complaint. The superintendent's decision to designate someone else or not to designate someone else with regard to any specific complaint shall not be appealable to the board of education.

5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint at the level of the sports equity coordinator, the complainant shall have the right, within thirty-five (35) days of the date of the decision, to appeal the decision to the Forsyth County Board of Education. In order to have the board review the sports equity coordinator's decision, the complainant must file with the superintendent a written statement setting forth the reasons he or she disagrees with the decision of the sports equity coordinator and the action the complainant is requesting the system to take. The complainant also shall include in the written statement a request that his or her complaint be referred to the Forsyth County Board of Education.
6. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written request of the complainant, the superintendent shall present the matter to the board of education at its regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The board shall review the original complaint, the decision of the sports equity coordinator, and the statement of the complainant appealing the decision. In addition, the board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
7. The board of education will either uphold the decision of the sports equity coordinator or require the system to take some other action in response to the complaint. A copy of the action of the board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the board of education or as a separate written statement, within ten (10) days of the date of the board's decision. The board shall be the final reviewing authority within the system.
8. A complainant may appeal a decision of the Forsyth County Board of Education rendered under these procedures to the State Board of Education in accordance with the procedures specified in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160.
9. This policy is not intended to deprive any student or parent/guardian of any right he/she may have to file a grievance pursuant to any other policy of the Forsyth County Board of Education, where appropriate. However, to the extent that a complainant files a grievance about the same matter pursuant to more than one policy, the timelines and process of these procedures shall control unless state or federal law should mandate otherwise.
10. The school system annually shall notify in the student/parent handbooks its students and parents of the names, office address and office telephone number of the system's sports equity coordinator.
11. All records related to the complaints filed concerning compliance with the Equity in Sports Act shall be maintained in accordance with the school system's record retention schedule, but in no event less than five (5) years from the date of such record.