

## **Grievance Policy and Procedures**

The Northeast Denver Innovation Zone (“NDIZ”) strives to be proactive in promoting a positive culture between all of our community members. The following policies apply to Grievances, including complaints, concerns, or conflicts, of any type. The NDIZ staff and NDIZ Board of Directors are committed to addressing and resolving Grievances in a timely and efficient manner.

NDIZ is comprised of multiple schools that operate in Denver Public Schools (“DPS”), and Grievances should generally only be filed with NDIZ after the concern has gone through the proper channels at the school level and, after that, only if the Grievance is related to an issue under the purview of NDIZ. Grievances received by NDIZ that are within the purview of DPS, or are better directed to DPS or to a lower level in the process will be forwarded to the proper person for resolution. NDIZ may discuss any Grievances submitted to NDIZ with its schools or DPS to determine which entity or person is best situated to address the concern.

The Board places great trust in its Executive Director or staff to manage the affairs of the zone and to serve our zone community. This Grievance process should be used only for genuine complaints, concerns, or conflicts that require the attention of the NDIZ Executive Director or the NDIZ Board; not for simple disagreements that should be resolved informally. The Board will not typically review Grievances based on the discretionary day-to-day decision-making or good faith judgment calls made by the Executive Director, unless there is clear evidence of misconduct or a need to address a substantial issue.

NDIZ employees may utilize this process to dispute work related decisions, like adverse employment actions or other work related concerns, complaints or conflicts.

Please follow these steps before filing a formal Grievance:

**1. Address issues with those directly involved** – Bring your complaint, concern, or conflict first to the person best positioned to address it. Make efforts to sincerely resolve the Grievance with those who are directly involved.

If you are a parent and it is a specific classroom or academic issue, this will most likely be an attempt to resolve the issue with your child’s teacher. If it is a broader, school-wide issue, this will most likely be an attempt to resolve the issue with a school administrator. If you are a zone employee this will most likely be an attempt to resolve the issue with the co-worker with whom you have the issue, or your supervisor if it is a broader, zone-wide issue.

If your attempts to resolve the complaint, concern, or conflict informally does not produce a satisfactory result, or you find the individual(s) involved to be non-responsive, and the issue is substantial, you may file a formal Grievance by following these steps:

**2. Complete a Grievance Form (available on the NDIZ website)** – This includes providing a brief summary of the issue; informal steps that were taken to resolve it, including discussions with those directly involved; the outcome of those attempts; the reasons why you were not satisfied with the outcome; a citation to any laws and/or policies that you believe were violated; and what you are requesting be reviewed and/or changed about the outcome.

**3. Submit the Grievance Form to the Executive Director** – The form may be mailed to the NDIZ officers or emailed directly to the Executive Director or his/her secretary. If the Grievance is an issue in

which the Executive Director is directly involved or in which the Executive Director has already issued a final decision then this form may be submitted directly to the NDIZ Board for consideration at [Board@NDIZ.org](mailto:Board@NDIZ.org).

**4. Executive Director Review** – The Executive Director, or the Board Chair when applicable, will within three working days, review the Grievance and either make a final determination in writing to the Grievant, direct the Grievance to DPS or to the applicable school for resolution, or request a meeting to discuss the concern further. Others involved may be consulted on the issue and/or invited to any meetings scheduled to discuss the issue.

**5. Executive Director Decision** – Within ten working days of the date the Grievance Form is submitted, or a later date as necessary or agreed to by the Grievant, the Executive Director will provide a written decision to the Grievant.

**6. NDIZ Board Review** – If the Grievant is not satisfied with the Executive Director’s decision or planned course of action, the Grievant may request that the Grievance be submitted by the Executive Director for review to the NDIZ Board within five working days from the date of the Executive Director’s written decision. If the Grievant requests Board review, the Executive Director will forward all documentation, including the original Grievance Form, any notes or summaries of meetings or actions taken, the Executive Director’s final written decision or planned course of action, and any other relevant information to the Board. A Board Member may request an additional statement from the Grievant, as well as any other information it deems relevant to research or request.

The Board President may appoint a mediator, as appropriate, to attempt to resolve the concern.

The Board President will determine whether or not to include the request on the agenda of the Board’s next meeting. If not added to the agenda by the Board President, an individual Board Member can make a motion to have it added to agenda during the board’s next meeting, and it will be added with a requisite vote of the majority, following regular procedures. If the Board President adds the Grievance to the agenda and/or a Board Member plans to make a motion to add it to the agenda, then the Grievant must be notified in advance.

At all stages of this process Board Members will take care to preserve expectations of privacy and confidentiality, including avoidance of public references to specific individuals or incidents, and the Board may call an executive session to discuss any Grievances, for which an executive session is allowed.

If the Grievance involves a specific zone employee, that employee will be informed by the Board President before the meeting at which the issue may be discussed and will be asked if he or she wants the discussion to happen during open session instead of executive session.

If the Grievance is directly and specifically related to an articulable action of a Board Member, that Board Member must be recused from the process. If the Grievance is reviewed at a meeting of the Board of Directors, the review may proceed as determined by the Board President. The Grievant or any other party is not entitled to speak or present any information, except as determined by the Board President.

If any Grievance is not reviewed at the next regular meeting following receipt of the request to review, it will be deemed to be final and resolved, with no further appeal. The decision or planned course of action

articulated by the Executive Director in his or her final written decision will be final, unless or until there is a change in circumstances.

**7. NDIZ Board's Decision** – Any decision by the Board at the conclusion of considering a Grievance, or a decision not to review a Grievance, will be final and the matter will be considered resolved. Any future consideration of the matter will require a change in circumstances and the Grievant will be required to initiate the process from the beginning and specifically articulate the change in circumstance necessitating the new Grievance. If there is not a change in circumstances, any communication from a Grievant or new Grievance Form filed on a matter that is resolved may be ignored or simply disposed of with a response from the Executive Director that the matter is deemed resolved.



# Northeast Denver Innovation Zone

## NDIZ Grievance Form

Available on-line at: <https://www.ndiz.org/grievance>

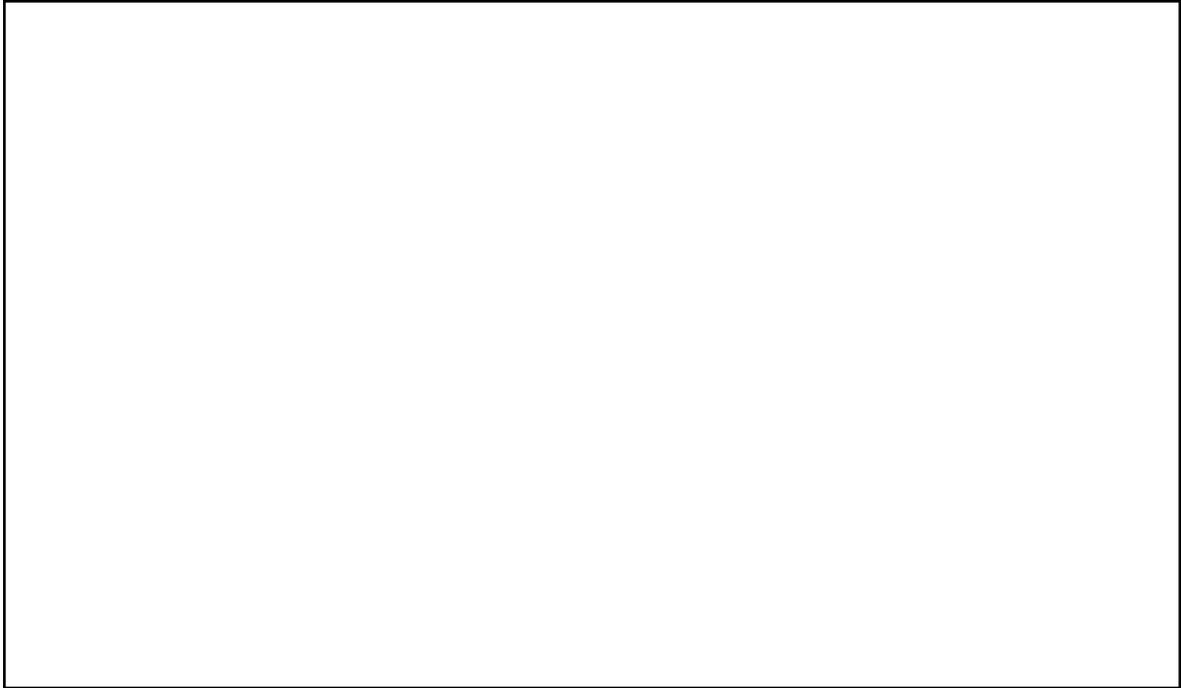
Please complete each section of this form and submit to the school's front office in an envelope with "Grievance" written on the outside; or email a copy to the Executive Director or his/her secretary with the term "Grievance" and the date in the Subject line.

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

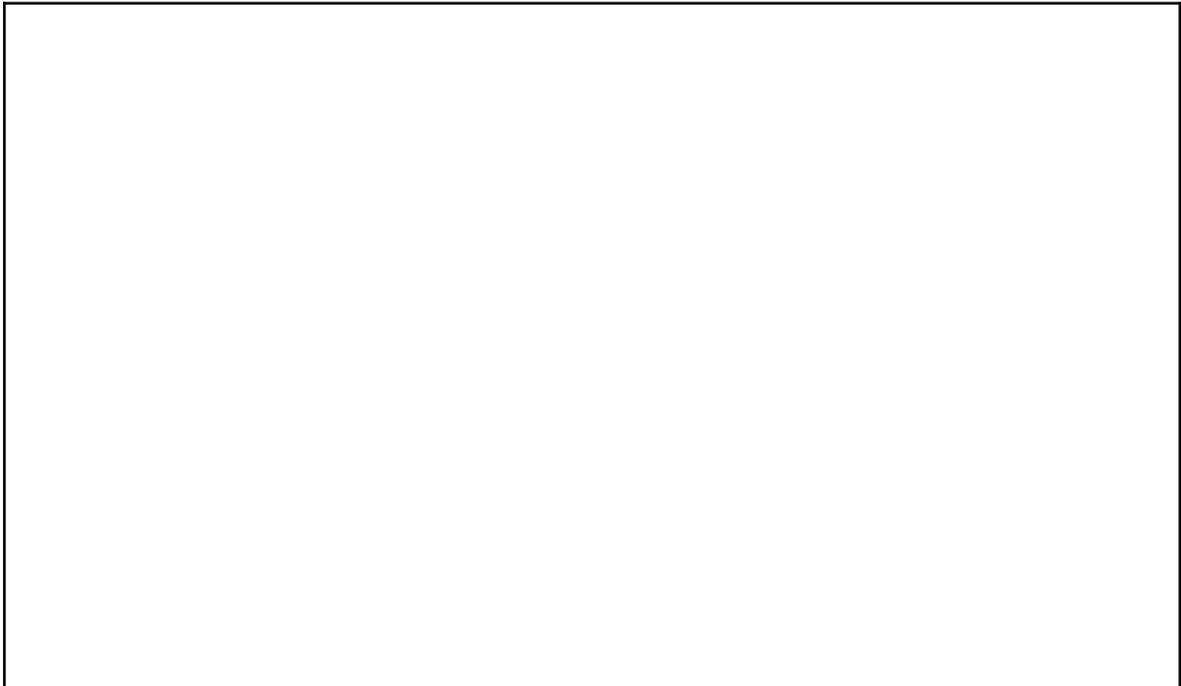
### Identifier

- I am a parent/guardian of a zone student
- I am a student of an NDIZ school
- I am a staff member of an NDIZ school
- I am a district partner of an NDIZ school
- I am a board member of NDIZ
- Other

Provide a brief summary of the issue, including the names of those directly involved:



Describe the steps you have taken to resolve this issue with those directly involved:



Describe the outcome of your attempts to resolve this issue with those directly involved:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the upper half of the page. It is intended for a user to provide a response or explanation.

Explain the reasons why you were not satisfied with the outcome:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the middle section of the page. It is intended for a user to explain the reasons for dissatisfaction with an outcome.

Cite any laws and/or school policies that you believe were violated in connection with this issue:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the upper half of the page. It is intended for a user to provide input or feedback.

Explain what, specifically, you want to be reviewed and/or changed about the outcome:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the lower half of the page. It is intended for a user to provide a detailed explanation of what they want to be reviewed or changed.