



San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District

P.O. Box 1087 | San Marcos, Texas 78666 | OFFICE 512.393.6700 | FAX 512.393.6787

March 31, 2022

Lucia E. Rodriguez

LEVEL I GRIEVANCE FORMAL RESPONSE

Dear Ms. Rodriguez,

This letter serves as a response to the Level I dispute resolution conference held on March 25, 2022. The conference was conducted in person at SMCISD Central Office, 631 Mill St, San Marcos, Tx 78666. Present at the meeting were you, [REDACTED], grievant, [REDACTED], family members, and [REDACTED], hearing officer.

I read through the assurances and stated that you would have a written response to your concerns before the close of district business on April 8, 2022.

During the conference, you stated that you were concerned about your daughter [REDACTED] safety at Mendez Elementary. This concern partially originated due to a lack of answers you had received from the principal and counselor following an incident on February 28, 2022.

The referenced incident involved a student bringing a pocket knife to school and showing it to your daughter and two other students during recess. Your daughter and the other students reported this to administration who then confiscated the knife and allegedly made an attempt to contact the parents of all students involved. You stated that you were the only parent who did not receive a call regarding the incident. When you addressed this with the principal, she stated that she had called you, however there is no evidence to support her statement. You expressed that this became the initial concern with both your daughter's safety and lack of communication from the school.



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You went on to describe additional concerns regarding the principal's ineffectiveness and perceived prejudices regarding your student. Specifically you stated the following:

- you were concerned that the principal violated a student's confidentiality by telling you what consequences and next steps she would be taking with the student who brought the knife to school.
- You believe that the principal does not want parents to be involved.
- The principal lied about reaching out to you regarding the incident and following your conversation with her, you discovered that in fact none of the other students' parents had been contacted.
- You met with the principal and [REDACTED], SMCISD Director of Student Support in order to understand why you were not contacted and how your student would be protected on campus.
- The principal lied about the number of staff supervising students on the playground that day.
- The principal became very defensive when you met with her and continues to be so to this day.
- The principal offered a "stay-away" agreement and said that your daughter could sign it without you being present; your daughter is a minor.
- You cannot trust the principal anymore based on these interactions.
- The principal offered a transfer for your daughter but failed to explain why.
- Following the initial incident, the student brought the knife again and threatened your daughter and her friends; on one occasion asking if they were "bulletproof."
- A district employee [REDACTED] responded to your post on facebook with confidential information that you yourself had not been told about.
- Your daughter now struggles with whether or not to tell the truth because she feels like she is in trouble with the principal and counselor from the original incident; she struggles sleeping and has posted concerns with the truth on her facebook page.



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In closing the conference , you stated that you are aware of an additional situation involving the student with the knife and another student who is white. You said that when the "white student" was confronted, her parents were immediately contacted and that she was provided with counseling immediately on the following day. You believe that the situation was handled differently because the student is white and your daughter and the other students involved in the original incident are hispanic.

We then concluded the meeting and I provided you with the next steps and a deadline for response to your grievance.

After careful review and consideration of the information and concerns presented during the Level I Conference, my disposition is as follows:

Remedy #1: The safety of students to be enforced.

Granted: Student safety is the number one priority for our district and this will not waver. Principals and teachers will continue to be provided timely training and expectations around safety procedures and protocols as they are modified and updated throughout the year. Principals will be reminded to utilize both on-campus and district resources to ensure that student safety remains a priority.

Remedy #2: Proper communication between the school and parents when safety incidents occur.

Granted: Principals and all campus administration will be provided with a reminder of expectations around timely parent communication regarding any incident or concern involving their student.

Remedy #3: [REDACTED] should be removed from her position.

Denied: It is clear from both written and verbal statements that communication to you from the principal should have been handled differently and that opportunities for clarification and support were missed. It is also evident that



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following the initial concern, the principal made additional attempts to support both you and your student toward a resolution.

Concern: Family being treated differently based on race.

Though not specifically listed as a remedy in the grievance, I have also investigated your concern regarding your family being treated differently than those of "a white student" involved in a similar situation. While no evidence can be found to support this claim, it is important to note that as a district, we take all claims of perceived racism seriously and will continue to do so.


If you have further questions about the grievance process, please contact Human Resources at (512) 393-6702.

Sincerely,


Executive Director of School Leadership
San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District

Attachment: Level One Dispute Resolution Form

copy:

 Chief Human Resource Officer