



## **Educator Self-Advocacy Toolkit**

*This process is adapted from a teacher ([Tyler Sisco](#)) at Washington HS in KCKPS - KNEA-KCK member.*

### **Contract Grievances**

*Note: It is important to understand the exact grievance or complaint process for your school district. You should be able to find this information in your school board policies or negotiated contract. Here is sample language from **Kansas City Kansas Public Schools Board Policy GAE***

*“Grievance is defined as a charge by one or more employees which alleges a violation of the terms and conditions of employment. This may include a complaint or disagreement as it relates to employee discipline or application of a District policy or decision that affects the employee. This does not include complaints or disagreements on matters for which other Board policies apply, including, but not limited to, complaints of discrimination, retaliation or harassment, terminations, or matters involving employee evaluations, transfers or work assignments”*

*Additionally, this district has a specific process that must be followed. First, the grievance must be discussed with your immediate supervisor. That is called Level 1. Level 2 involves a written grievance and filing a specific Grievance Form. You move to Level 2 if the grievance is not resolved at Level 1, and if it is still not resolved at Level 2, then you move to Level 3, where you will submit your formal written grievance to the Superintendent.*

## Sample Letter

Hello, [name of supervisor]

### **First: State your problem simply:**

I am contacting you to request the resolution of a grievance I have regarding [insert your complaint, example: my contractual time being violated]. According to the [insert policy/contract name with year and page number], I should receive [insert direct quote or paraphrase from the policy, example:] “25 minutes of uninterrupted, duty-free lunch” and my contract time should be “7:00 am to 3:00 pm, unless modified through mutual consent of the employee and supervisor”.

### **Second: Detail the instances that occurred. Example:**

In the last 2 weeks, I documented 3 times when I was asked to attend a parent meeting from 2:45 pm to 3:30 pm. These meeting times were to accommodate the needs of the parents, and I support the involvement of parents in their child’s education, but I did not give my mutual consent to modify my work times, nor was I even asked if I wanted to exchange my time from 3:00 to 3:30 for time off at a different point in the week, which could be done with my consent according to our contract. I was expected to be at this meeting, and felt I had no choice to attend.

Additionally, in the last 3 weeks I have documented 2 instances where an administrator came to my classroom during my duty-free lunch and asked if I would permit a student to sit in my classroom during the lunch period, essentially making me “on-duty” during that time. I felt I had no choice but to say “yes” in this instance, because the request came from a supervisor. This may not seem like a problem, but it is. If I am monitoring a student, I do not have the freedom to leave my classroom for any reason, without taking the student with me. That means no bathroom breaks, no trips to the staff lounge to heat up my lunch or make copies, and no way for me to walk the short trip to my car if I need to retrieve an item. This violates my right to a duty-free lunch.

**Third: Explain what you need:**

To resolve these issues, I would like to request a meeting with you, my supervisor, between the times of 7:00 am and 3:00 pm. This meeting should follow the grievance procedures outlined in [insert contract or board policy here, with details like how many days the supervisor has to respond].. If you are unavailable during my planning period, 1:00 to 2:30, then I request that you arrange for someone else to cover my class during our meeting. During this meeting I would like to discuss how we can both work to follow these policies and better protect my time as an employee.

Regards,

[Insert your name and email signature]