



LABRAE LOCAL SCHOOLS

A Parent's Guide to Being Heard at School

It is the intention of all school staff and the LaBrae Board of Education to listen to, and resolve, issues of concern as quickly and effectively as possible.

Following the procedures outlined in this guide will help bring about what we all want for our children—a truly effective education in a safe and encouraging learning environment.

Step I: Take your concerns to the person closest to the problem

No matter where the problem is, take your concern there first. Whether in the classroom, on the bus, or on the practice field, the quickest and easiest solution is usually with the staff member most directly involved in the situation.

It is best if you make time to talk with the school personnel regularly before problems arise. Know who your child's teachers, bus drivers, and coaches are and how they may be contacted. Tell them when things are going well, and communicate any concerns you have quickly and openly.

If you call for an appointment to see your child's teacher, why not let him or her know in advance what the general nature or concern is. This gives the teacher an opportunity to ask the staff members for information that might relate to your problem or concern. When a personal visit isn't possible, call the school to state the problem, and during that conversation, offer to call back at a time when you and the staff member can both discuss the situation in more detail. The problem you or your child faces may be the result of an oversight or misunderstanding that can be easily corrected once it is brought to the attention of the staff member most directly involved. Give the staff member a chance to tackle the issue first.

Step II: Present your concern to the next level

The principal is responsible for supervision of staff within the buildings. The athletic director supervises all school athletics. There are support services coordinators who supervise all busing, maintenance, custodial and cafeteria activity. Each one is an example of the next level of school personnel you should contact if the staff members closest to the problem haven't been able to satisfactorily resolve the difficulty.

Supervisory personnel will not always have ready access to the information they need to be of immediate assistance, and working through them will often require additional time.

Step III: Talk with the Superintendent of schools

Sometimes all the best intentions can't solve a problem. When you believe you've worked hard with those closest to the problem, and you have taken the problem to the next level but still haven't achieved a satisfactory outcome, the superintendent of schools is the next place to go.

By calling the superintendent's office and setting an appointment, you establish an opportunity to completely discuss the issue and steps previously taken. An alternative would be to explain the issue and steps you have taken in a written letter to the superintendent. This provides the superintendent an opportunity to research the issue.

Step IV: Contact your school board members

School board members are elected to represent the interest of all parents and district residents, and you should always feel free to tell them your point of view. School board members do not, however, have direct authority in day-to-day school operations. All authority is the result of official actions by a majority of the Board at meetings open to the public.

The Board's primary responsibility is to make policies that guide the school district. Any change in policy requires Board adoption upon the recommendation of the superintendent. Some policy changes may require substantial public input and consultation with the school district's attorney. These requirements often increase the time required for the Board to make a response. Policy is constantly being reviewed and updated.

Board members are there to listen to your concerns and relay your information to the entire Board.

So when should I contact a Board Member?

After you have gone through all of the steps and you still have questions or a concern.

A Board member may take one or all of the following actions:

1. Contact the Superintendent
2. Bring information to the full Board for consideration.

Hopefully, these guidelines provide some tips that might enhance our problem-solving and interaction.

The Community

The community served by the LaBrae Local School District is comprised of Braceville and Warren Townships – bordering Warren City, the largest urban area in Trumbull County.

The employment of the residents of this northeastern Ohio community closely resembles that of most of Trumbull County. Within the townships are small corporate manufacturing companies, a steel company, small businesses and family farms. Automotive, steel and related industries in the county also provide employment for many Trumbull County citizens.

The District

The name of the school district, LaBrae, was selected by combining the name of Leavittsburg, located in Warren Township, with Braceville, when the township district consolidated in 1970. The school name, colors - scarlet and gray, and mascot – **VIKING**, were selected by a student vote at the time of the merger. This initial merger activity enhanced positive support and pride among staff, students, parents and community that continues in the LaBrae School District today.

LaBrae students maintain a high scholastic record as evidenced by honors earned on state and national achievement tests, scholarships awarded and admissions gained to top universities, including military academies. In addition to academic excellence, LaBrae is especially proud of its sports and music programs which have been recognized on the local, regional and state levels. Band members and athletes have earned college scholarships based on their achievements. Other extra-curricular activities popular with LaBrae students include Student Council, Spirit Sweeties, German Club, Spanish Club, Prep Bowl Team, Letterman's Club, Yearbook Staff, SADD, Cheerleading and the honor of being selected to the National Honor Society.

The LaBrae School District operates a preschool through 2nd grade building and a 3rd - 12th grade complex. Both facilities are on one campus on North Leavitt Road.