

Parent or legal guardian and student complaints procedures

In the case of disagreements between parents, legal guardians or students and teachers, the parties involved should first try to settle them through discussion. Parents, legal guardians or students are encouraged to address concerns at the lowest appropriate level. In most cases concerns should first be discussed with the teacher involved. If the issue cannot be resolved, students may contact their class teacher, the IB Coordinator, or the principal.

When taking action against school decisions, two cases are to be distinguished: complaint and appeal.

Complaint

Complaints against measures that are not administrative acts can be lodged with the school administration. The awarding of individual grades in class or on the report card and interim report card is usually not an administrative act and therefore cannot be challenged in the appeal procedure. In this case, a (grade) complaint can be filed with the school. The subject teacher then decides whether the complaint will be rectified by changing the grade. If the complaint is not rectified, the school must submit the complaint to the school supervisory authority (education authority, district government) for a decision.

Appeal

Parents or pupils of full age can appeal to the school against school decisions that are administrative acts. Administrative acts of the school are, for example, the decision on

- the admission or dismissal of the pupil,
- promotion or non-promotion,
- disciplinary measures according to § 53 SchulG (education act) and
- examination decisions.

The appeal procedure is governed by §§ 68 ff. Administrative Court Procedures Code (VwGO). The objection must be submitted to the school.

If the school's administrative act is accompanied by instructions on how to appeal, the objection can be lodged within one month after the administrative act has been announced. Otherwise, it may be lodged within one year.

The school has the possibility to withdraw its decision and thus to remedy the appeal. If the school is unable to remedy the objection, it shall submit the matter to the school supervisory authority for a decision. If the school supervisory authority rejects the objection in accordance with § 73 VwGO with

a reasoned notice of objection with instructions on how to appeal, the persons concerned can file a complaint with the competent administrative court within one month. According to § 52 No. 3 VwGO, the competent court is usually the administrative court in whose district the administrative act was issued or - in the case of an action for an obligation - would have to be issued. The action must be filed in writing. It may be sent to the court or filed with the court. There is no obligation to be represented by a lawyer at the administrative court.

Availability and Communication of the Complaints Procedure

Lessing Gymnasium ensures that all students, parents and guardians have access to the complaints procedure.

The procedure is:

- published on the school's website;
- introduced to IB students during orientation and at the beginning of each school year;
- available upon request from the school administration;
- communicated to parents through school information channels.

Class teachers and the IB Coordinator ensure that students are aware of the procedure and know whom they can contact if they wish to raise a concern or complaint.

The procedure is reviewed regularly as part of the school's quality assurance and IB evaluation processes.

Cologne, 15th June 2026

Sources:

Schulgesetz für das Land NRW (Schulgesetz NRW – SchulG): <https://bass.schule.nrw/6043.htm> (date of last access: 9th May 2026)

Verwaltungsgerichtsordnung (VwGO): <https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/vwgo/> (Date of last access: 9th May 2026)