

Know Your Rights

Public reprimands

You have the right not to be criticized in public by an administrator.

There's nothing more demeaning than being berated or criticized by your principal in front of students, staff members, or parents. This kind of behavior is not only highly unprofessional—it's also forbidden in our contract. Public reprimands are usually indicative of poor management skills and are corrosive to the positive work culture so important to the school community. Article X, 11d, states: "When imposing discipline or when giving reprimands, warnings, or criticism, confidentiality and privacy appropriate to the professional relationship shall be maintained."

If an administrator begins to reprimand you in front of others, such as in your classroom with students present or at a faculty meeting, calmly remind him or her of your right, as guaranteed in your contract, not to be criticized in public. If he or she persists, it may be appropriate to file a grievance, and if an administrator engages in repeated violations, there may be grounds for an organizing campaign to respond appropriately.

For more information: See Article X, Section 11d, of the UTLA-LAUSD contract. Our contract is one of the most comprehensive in the United States and it protects a wide variety of your professional rights. For the full text of the collective bargaining agreement, log on to www.utla.net.