

Sample Policy for Conflict Resolution

The School District believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. Part of a healthy environment is the freedom to openly disagree. With this freedom comes the responsibility to discuss and resolve disagreements with respect for the rights and opinions of others.

To prevent conflict, each school within the School District will incorporate conflict resolution education and problem solving techniques into the curriculum and campus programs. This is an important step in promoting respect and acceptance, developing new ways of communicating, understanding, and accepting differing values and cultures within the school community and helps ensure a safe and healthy learning environment

The School District will provide training to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills students need to choose alternatives to self-destructive, violent behavior and dissolve interpersonal and intergroup conflict. Each school will adopt a Student Code of Conduct to be followed by every student while on school grounds, when traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, and during lunch period, whether on or off campus.

The Student Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Students are to resolve their disputes without resorting to violence.
- Students, especially those trained in conflict resolution and peer mediation, are encouraged to help fellow students resolve problems peaceably.
- Students can rely on staff trained in conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies to intervene in any dispute likely to result in violence.
- Students needing help in resolving a disagreement, or students observing conflict may contact an adult or peer mediators (*give location where listing of designated staff and students is posted*).
- Students involved in a dispute will be referred to a conflict resolution or peer mediation session with trained adult or peer mediators. Staff and mediators will keep the discussions confidential.
- Conflict resolution procedures shall not supplant the authority of staff to act to prevent violence, ensure campus safety, maintain order, and discipline students.

How and When to Use the Conflict Resolution Policy:

We use our Conflict Resolution Policy for major disagreements as well as for minor misunderstandings. We encourage everyone to talk directly to each other when conflicts first arise. People can follow the steps on their own (without an outside conflict manager) or ask someone (a teacher, head teacher, conflict manager, another parent) to help guide them through the steps.

The Process:

- Cool off (sit in a quiet place, take a walk, talk to a mediator)
- Agree on the ground rules (no interrupting, no put downs, no yelling)
- Each person tells what happened and how s/he felt (use I-statements)
- Each person says what s/he needs to happen next
- Brainstorm solutions
- Choose one solution (write down the agreement, plan to check if it is working)
- Use the solution

If the above process does not result in a solution:

For Students:

- A teacher will repeat the process
- The head teacher or a class meeting will mediate
- Parents will participate in the process
- The district will participate

For Adults:

- A teacher will mediate
- Two adults (staff or parents) will mediate
- The entire staff & interested parents will participate
- The district/union will participate