

Conflict Resolution Policy

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Rationale

When conflict develops between people in our school, it is important that we have a process to address conflict in a way that demonstrates love of God and neighbor. Thankfully, the Word of God has the remedy when conflict happens between Christians (Matthew 18:15–17), that is, if we are prepared to lovingly look hard at our own hearts and commit to stepping closer together and pursue true reconciliation.

However, sometimes conflict resolution requires a different way of addressing concerns or complaints. We acknowledge a conflict resolution process that can also help to manage disagreements, yet always remembering that dealing with conflict biblically is the most effective way of bringing together those who are hurting or feeling wronged.

We are exhorted to rejoice in the process of conflict resolution (again I say, rejoice!), to be gentle, to present our case to God first, and to, “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things” (v. 8, NIV). We support adopting the attitudes of Philippians 4 and then applying them in a loving manner toward those with who we share conflict.¹

Policy Statements	Regulations
1. Conflict resolution should first consider a biblical approach using Matthew 18.	1.1 First, we are to attempt to handle the conflict personally (within ourselves) by: 1.1.1 overlooking and forgiving an offense; 1.1.2 not jumping to conclusions about the meaning of the other person’s words, actions, and intentions; 1.1.3 remembering what we know to be good about the other person; and 1.1.4 reminding ourselves of how blessed we are to already be forgiven by Jesus Christ. 1.2 If the conflict cannot or should not be handled internally, we

¹ <https://blog.acsi.org/developing-deeper-school-conflict-resolution>

	<p>are to handle the conflict privately (involving only the two involved parties) in a way that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2.1 brings glory to God as we recall the attitudes of Matthew 5 and Philippians 4; 1.2.2 gets the “log” out of our eye before confronting the other person’s “speck”; 1.2.3 gently helps the other person see their part in the conflict; and 1.2.4 makes every effort to reconcile as quickly as possible. <p>1.3 Should the conflict not be able to be handled privately, we are to seek the help of one or two others by meeting together with a trusted leader, or else seek the assistance of a trained Christian conciliator, counselor, or other third party that both individuals agree to consult.²</p> <p>1.4 This approach applies to conflicts between members of the WRCA community.</p> <p>1.5 This process should not be applied in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5.1 When an idea is presented as part of public discourse, such as in an online forum or in a large meeting (i.e., Society meeting) 1.5.2 When an individual has committed an illegal act 1.5.3 When the conflict has to do with meeting employment expectations from a supervisor and/or a contract.
<p>2. Conflict resolution for parents and students shall follow a formal process.</p>	<p>2.1 The general nature of parent/student disputes involve concerns about academic progress, disciplinary actions, or disagreements with school policies.</p> <p>2.2 Parent disputes may involve direct communication with teachers but may also escalate to discussions with school administrators.</p> <p>2.3 Privacy and confidentiality will be considered to protect the child’s interests.</p> <p>2.4 The Parent-Student Handbook outlines the following formal process to be used for dealing with conflict or concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.4.1 Step 1: Talk to the teacher or staff member about the concern. If it is an issue that will require some time,

² <https://blog.acsi.org/developing-deeper-school-conflict-resolution#:~:text=First%2C%20we%20are%20to%20attempt,about%20the%20other%20person%3B%20and>

	<p>please arrange an appointment so that the matter can be given proper attention. <i>If unresolved, proceed to Step 2.</i></p> <p>2.4.2 Step 2: If the matter is not resolved by the Step 1 meeting, then the issue can be dealt with in a meeting with the principal. It is expected the principal will follow a standardized complaint process. <i>If unresolved, proceed to Step 3.</i></p> <p>2.4.3 Step 3: Should further discussion be required, all parties involved at each level should meet together with the head of school to bring the matter to resolution. It is expected the head of school will follow a standardized complaint process. If unresolved, proceed to 2.4.4.</p> <p>2.4.4 If Steps 1-3 have not brought about a resolution, then an appeal can be made in writing to the school board by way of a standardized appeal form. This written appeal must be dated no later than two weeks from the last meeting and include all related correspondence to date. See Appeal Policy. If unresolved, proceed to Step 2.4.7.</p> <p>2.4.5 The school board will not respond to communications that have bypassed the Steps 1-3, except to direct them to the proper process.</p> <p>2.4.6 Individual school board members will not meet or discuss concerns with parents or students related to an ongoing conflict resolution process as set out by the appeals process (see policy statement 4). School administration will inform the school board upon successfully initiating and concluding a formal appeal application involving a parent or student.</p> <p>2.4.7 After an appeal committee is appointed by the board, and the appeal committee's decision has been delivered, the student and parents may appeal to the Society of Christian Schools of BC for mediation.</p>
<p>3. Conflict resolution for teachers and employees shall follow a formal process.</p>	<p>3.1 The general nature of teacher or employee disputes arise out of an interpretation, application, or alleged breach of the contract between the teacher/employee and the society.</p> <p>3.2 Teacher/employee disputes are typically addressed through internal channels within the school.</p>

3.3 Disputes that arise that are not related to the contract may also be addressed through the BC Human Rights Code, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Criminal Code of Canada, Work Safe BC, if appropriate.

3.4 Guiding questions to help resolve conflict are as follows:

1. What is the dispute?
2. Does it arise out of an interpretation, application or alleged breach of the contract between the teacher/employee and the society?
3. Is it related to a concern with the BC Human Rights Code, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Criminal Code of Canada, Work Safe BC?
4. Has the teacher/employee followed steps outlined in the contract, the staff handbook and/or other applicable policies?

3.5 The Staff Handbook outlines the following formal process to be used for dealing with conflict or concerns:

3.5.1 Step 1: Talk to the staff member (or if appropriate, the IB coordinator) about the concern. If it is an issue that will require some time, please arrange an appointment so that the matter can be given proper attention. *If unresolved, proceed to Step 2.*

3.5.2 Step 2: If the matter is not resolved by the Step 1 meeting, then the issue can be dealt with in a meeting with the supervisor (if appropriate). It is expected the supervisor will follow a standardized complaint process. *If unresolved, proceed to Step 3.*

3.5.3 Step 3: Should further discussion be required, all parties involved at each level should meet together with the head of school to bring the matter to resolution. It is expected the head of school will follow a standardized complaint process. If unresolved, proceed to 2.4.

3.5.4 If Steps 1-3 have not brought about a resolution, then an appeal can be made in writing to the school board by way of a standardized appeal form (see Regulation 4.1). This written appeal must be dated no later than two weeks from the last meeting and include all related correspondence to date. If unresolved, proceed to step 3.4.7.

	<p>3.5.5 The school board will not respond to communications that have bypassed the Steps 1-3, except to direct them to the proper process.</p> <p>3.5.6 Individual school board members will not meet or discuss concerns with teachers and employees related to an ongoing conflict resolution process as set out by the appeals process (see policy statement 4). School administration will inform the school board upon successfully initiating and concluding a formal appeal application involving a teacher or employee.</p> <p>3.5.7 After an appeal committee is appointed by the board, and the appeal committee's decision has been delivered, the student and parents may appeal to the Society of Christian Schools of BC for mediation.</p> <p>3.4 Other references to conflict resolution are included in the Staff Handbook, Discipline Policy 1201, Appeal Policy 3401, Ombudsperson Policy 3403, and the CTABC Code of Ethics Policy 200.</p>
<p>4. If the complainant deems the conflict has not been satisfactorily resolved, an appeal can be made.</p>	<p>4.1 If either students, parents, teachers or employees have a concern or feel that a situation has been handled incorrectly, and they have discussed this matter in person with the school personnel as set forth in the conflict resolution process, yet the matter remains unresolved, an appeal can be made in writing to the school board using a standardized appeal process. Appeals will only be heard at the discretion of the school board.</p> <p>4.2 Once an appeal is received by the board, the board will consult with administration, verifying that the prescribed conflict resolution process has been followed. After confirmation, the board will continue with the appeal process.</p> <p>4.3 An appeal must be brought within a reasonable time (i.e., within two weeks, although the board may, upon application, extend that time). The notice of appeal should be delivered in writing to the chairperson of the school board.</p> <p>4.4 An appeal should only be heard if the appeal process is likely to reveal new/relevant information related to the matter or if the appeal committee suspects the prior investigation or conclusions are flawed in some ways.</p> <p>4.5 The board is committed to clear and transparent</p>

	<p>communication. After receiving an appeal, the board will document reasons why the appeal is or isn't heard on the appeal form. If new information is revealed, it should be documented as such. If the conclusion after the appeal is different from prior determinations, rationale will also be clearly documented.</p> <p>4.6 A response from the school board will be made within 2 days of the next scheduled board meeting.</p> <p>4.7 The appeal committee will consist of the board chairperson, two other board members, one faculty, and one parent from the community. These people on the committee should not have been involved in the conflict resolution process.</p> <p>4.8 The appeal process will include both the receipt of written submissions by parents and the administration, as well as an opportunity for an oral presentation.</p> <p>4.9 The person requesting the appeal will be given one hour to present their position. The person shall submit, in writing, to the appeal committee, the reasons for their appeal. The submission must deal with the specific issue that is of concern. Any other related information may be presented in the oral appeal.</p> <p>4.10 The administration will be given one hour to present its position. The administrator shall submit in writing to the appeal committee the sequence of events and decisions that led to the appeal. The submission must state clearly the reason why the administration believes their position is justified.</p> <p>4.11 The decision of the appeal committee is final and will be provided to the person requesting the appeal in a reasonable time frame.</p>
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The school leadership team through consultation with the school staff developed this policy, and it was approved by the WRCA Board of Directors. It will be communicated to the school community and made available on the school website. The leadership team will review the policy and the WRCA Board of Directors will approve suggested revisions every two years.

