

## *La Crescent Montessori & STEM School* **Conflict Resolution Policy**

First Reading: 2/18/16, Approved 3/17/16, Updated 7/10/2023

Maintaining effective relationships with parents and/or staff is essential for the success of the mission of this school. It is in all of our interests to establish and promote positive communication and understanding for each other's dynamic roles in this unique school.

It is the goal of this policy to outline a procedure that will allow conflicts to be resolved in a timely manner to the mutual satisfaction of all parties involved.

Everyone involved in the conflict resolution process has certain rules to follow:

1. Confidences must be maintained.
2. Courtesy and respect must be maintained.
3. Try to be empathetic to others points of view.
4. Anger, while understandable when one is frustrated, must not be inappropriately displayed.
5. When it is your turn to speak, be honest and concise.
6. When it is not your turn to speak, listen to what others are saying and ask for clarification if you don't understand something.
7. Out of respect for the time of the others involved in the process, stay on task and don't dredge up past events not directly related to the conflict at hand.
8. Seek a solution that is fair and satisfactory for all interests.
9. Follow up to be conducted approximately one month after resolution by the mediator or team leader who closes out documentation.

When conflict occurs between staff members and a parent or other staff members, then a series of steps will be taken to resolve the conflict. Before the formal conflict resolution process is activated, persons are expected to make a good faith attempt to resolve their differences by direct communication (See Appendix A - Building a Bridge to a Successful Resolution of Conflict.) If the conflict can be so resolved, it will save many people's time as well as eliminating the paperwork included in the mediation/team meeting process.

## **Conflict Resolution Procedure**

### **1. Attempt direct communication**

When someone believes that a problem has arisen between themselves and one or more members of staff, colleagues, or parents, s/he should try to first deal directly with the individual(s) involved.

- 1.1 State your thoughts and feelings in a non-accusatory manner.
- 1.2 Listen to others points of view and try to empathize.
- 1.3 Try to think of possible solutions.

### **2. Activate formal conflict resolution procedure**

If direct communication does not remedy the problem, the next step is to contact the Head of School. If the conflict is with the Head of School or the Director of Operations, please refer to the Head of School or Director of Operations, whichever is not involved in the conflict. .

- 2.1 Contact the Head of School (or DO). Any LMSS member, or staff may initiate the conflict resolution procedure by contacting the Head of School.
- 2.2 A written statement from each individual involved may be requested.
- 2.3 Conflict resolution documentation will be initiated at this point.
- 2.4 The Head of School (or DO) will contact the other parties to inform him/her that the conflict resolution procedure has been initiated.

### **3. Mediation**

Mediation session(s) will be scheduled. Often discussing a problem with a third party identifies a misunderstanding resolving a conflict with a minimum of effort.

- 3.1 This meeting should include the conflicting parties along with the Head of School to identify and discuss the problem.
- 3.2 This meeting should be held in a private location with no distractions.
- 3.3 The suggestions in steps 1.1-1.3 shall also be applied here.
- 3.4 The role of the mediator is to listen and make suggestions.
- 3.5 A successful mediation session would result in both parties agreeing that the situation has been resolved to their satisfaction.
- 3.6 If the session successfully resolves the problem, the conflict resolution documentation should be completed to reflect this and the procedure is concluded.
- 3.7 If either party is the HOS or the DO, and the conflict remains unresolved then a request can be made to escalate the conflict for Board Review.
- 3.8 If the parties are unable to come to an agreement together, the HOS will decide how the conflict will be resolved, limited only by laws and regulations. This will be the final determination.

**4. Petition Board of Directors (Only if one or more parties to the conflict is the HOS or DO)**

Parties should appear to a meeting held by the Board of Directors. This meeting may be held as either an open meeting or a closed meeting depending on the situation...to be determined by statute.

- 4.1 Each side in the conflict should present their view of the situation.
- 4.2 The role of the Board members is to listen and ask questions.
- 4.3 Upon hearing a brief description from all parties directly involved and obtaining any information deemed necessary, the Board shall decide how the conflict is to be resolved.
- 4.4 It is expected that any Board member directly involved in the conflict would recuse herself/himself from the decision.
- 4.5 In order to allow due process, a final decision *may* take up to two Board meetings. A final decision will be announced and the procedures will be documented and concluded.
- 4.6 The decision of the Board shall be final subject only to Federal and State laws, the LMSS contract with its governing authority and LMSS bylaws.

The conflict resolution documentation should be completed to reflect the decision and the procedure is concluded. All documentation will be filed in each party's private employee file.

**Appendix A**  
**Building a Bridge to a Successful Resolution of Conflict**

PERSON #1

I WANT...

I FEEL...

THE REASON IS...

MY UNDERSTANDING OF...

MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY....

CAN WE AGREE ON...

PERSON #2

MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY...

MY UNDERSTANDING OF...

THE REASON IS...

I FEEL...

I WANT...

CAN WE AGREE ON...

Etc. Etc.

### Conflict Resolution Documentation

Involved Parties:

Current conflict resolution step:

Team members involved at this step: (if applicable)

Brief statement describing nature of this conflict:

Notes from mediation/meeting:

Conflict resolved at this step? Yes/No

If yes: date for scheduled follow up:

If no: name of person responsible for next step in conflict resolution procedure to receive existing documentation:

Signatures of involved parties/mediator/team:

Name

Date

Name

Date