Appeals & Conflict Resolution Policy

At Flex Academy we have five different people groups involved in the process of providing education:

- Children
- Parents
- Educators: Teachers, Education Assistants and Learning Coaches
- Administration Staff and Leaders
- Kelowna Christian Center Society (KCCS) Staff & Leadership

Student to Student

When two students cannot resolve a conflict that is school-related or school-based then it is their responsibility to go to their teacher or supervising authority to find a resolution.

- Students have the freedom to involve their parents but the parent must do all they can to respect the teacher’s role in the process of resolution.
- Parents should avoid directly addressing the other student or the other student's parent
- If a parent cannot maintain that level of objectivity, they should allow the school authority to work through the solution.
- If a resolution cannot be found between the two students, then it needs to go to the teacher.

Student to Teacher or Teacher to Student

When a student or teacher cannot resolve a conflict, it is the student's or teacher's role to involve the parents in resolving the conflict.

- The teacher needs to establish their role as a position of authority in the student's life. It is important to understand that the teacher has that ability because the parent has placed their child under that authority. Parents need to respect the teacher and be careful how they question their expertise, particularly in the presence of their child.
- If the conflict cannot be resolved at that level then either the teacher or the parent should involve a Flex Assistant Director.
- The teacher may need to involve a Flex Assistant Director independent of the parents, in which case the parent may be contacted by the Director or Assistant Director rather than the teacher.

Parent to Educator or Educator to Parent

When a conflict cannot be resolved between the parent and an Educator (Teacher, Education Assistant or Learning Coach) either the parent or the Educator should bring the issue to the Flex Administration.

> The Director of Flex Academy has a unique relationship with parents, teachers and other Administrators within Flex Academy and within HCOS' wider school community. The Flex Academy Director does their part to be fair to all parties.

Parent to Administration or Administration to Parent

When a conflict cannot be resolved by a parent to Flex administration or vice-a-versa, then school leadership can be appealed to, first in writing and then via phone conversation. Parents and Guardians are encouraged to use the following process for dealing with individual issues or concerns:

Step One: The persons directly involved must deal with the issue first. It is essential that meaningful communication is established right from the beginning. Both parties must clearly identify the issues being discussed. There must be an open discussion and an honest attempt to settle the issue at this level, considering the understanding that policies must be followed.

Step Two: If the issues cannot be resolved through open discussion, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Flex Director.

Step Three: If Step Two does not result in a resolution, the Director will refer the matter to the Head of Schools at the parents/guardians' request. The Head of School will review the issue and then contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the issue in order to work towards a resolution.

Step Four: If the matter remains unresolved after the prior step, the matter may be appealed to the School Board. The appeal must be submitted in writing, in care of the school, within no more than five days after communication with the Head of School.

Step Five: In extreme situations, the decision of the Board may be appealed to the School’s Association, The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) Ombudsperson.

All communication should be done with care and sensitivity to the community we represent.

Conflicts Outside of These Parameters

Occasionally any one of the six people groups will have concerns on a broader scope concerning the school:

- Always try to address the issues to the level of authority at which they can be resolved.
- Work hard to communicate factually - ask the necessary questions to ensure that the facts are straight.
- If you are not satisfied that one level of authority has brought the situation to resolution then you have the freedom to take it to the next level.

Broader issues regarding policy and school procedures need to be addressed with the school leadership, first the Flex Academy Director and the Heads of School, then to the Society Board.

Personal issues with those in authority need to be addressed first with them and then with their immediate supervisor.

Steps to Conflict Resolution

1. When you are wronged by someone else then it is your responsibility to go directly to that person and speak to them personally. Things to remember:
   - Be careful to try and hear their side of the story. Many times, the situation is only a misunderstanding. There are always two sides to every conflict.
   - As much as possible deal with facts and not feelings. Try to set aside your own hurt enough to inquire and communicate about the actual facts.
2. After you have communicated one-on-one with the individual whom your concern is with and if you are not satisfied with the response, then we can bring someone else into the situation.
   - The purpose of the other person is to help with objectivity not to gang up on the one whom we are trying to address.
   - Let the other person mediate in the conversation – be willing to change your own position based upon their input.
   - Often it is helpful to bring someone in when you are still emotionally troubled over the issue in order to help you both communicate and listen to the other side.
3. If the individual in question still does not listen to you and the other person then you may take it to the next level of authority. Generally, the next level of authority will be able to help resolve the issue in conflict.
   - If satisfaction is not found with the next level of authority then the issue needs to go up the ladder to the next level of authority.
   - Often the next level of authority may disagree or have a different perspective on the issue under examination.
   - If the authorities responsible disagree or don't see the issue in the same light as you then you need to reassess the issue or reassess your relationship with the organization or authority structure.

Throughout the entire process the underlying motives must be to seek the truth and to bring resolution, forgiveness and restitution.

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