



1302 RELATIONAL CONFLICTS

Policy Type: Board Policy Manual

Applies To: Board Directors, All Staff, Students, Visitors

Approved By: LCS Board

Policy Reviewed: every 2 years

Adopted: 06 2021

Revisions:

1. PURPOSE:

- (a) This policy recognizes that procedures are needed to deal with relationships that become strained, or even broken, by tensions and open conflicts. The LCS Board places a high value on building and sustaining relationships between the administration and staff, among staff, between parents and students and the administration, as well as relationships between students themselves. This policy is also relevant to relationship issues between the Board Directors and the school.
- (b) Conflicts are considered to be a normal part of any working environment. Conflicts that are dealt with constructively produce growth and advancement. Conflicts become harmful when a conflict is allowed to escalate to the point where relationships are harmed and the workplace or student culture is impacted. This policy addresses interpersonal conflicts that are:
 - 1.b.1. beginning to show signs of harm, or;
 - 1.b.2. have already done harm.

2. GOALS FOR DEALING WITH RELATIONAL CONFLICT

- (a) Parties in conflict will commit themselves to:
 - Discern and articulate the contributing issues or triggers.
 - Recognize and acknowledge harm done.
 - Dialogue to generate solutions.
 - Restore trust.
 - Be accountable to commitments made
 - Celebrate what has been accomplished.
- (b) Parties in conflict may have three options for dealing with their conflict, according to the circumstance and the option chosen by the parties that will meet their purposes.

- **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:** The goal of conflict management is to restore a functional working or student environment by restoring trust between the parties at the professional level in spite of unresolved issues that generated the conflict.
- **CONFLICT RESOLUTION:** The goal is to achieve mutually satisfactory solutions to issues that generated the tension or conflict and to bring the parties back into a healthy working relationship.
- **CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:** The goal is to reconcile and transform conflicting relationships through a process that leads to exploring underlying conflicting issues and interests, achieving mutual acceptance in spite of differences, repentance/acknowledgement and forgiveness that restores personal relationships in the spirit of love and grace.
- *Note: Parties may need to reconcile their preferences when they are not in agreement as to which level they desire to work on regarding their conflict issues.*

3. STEPS IN DEALING WITH DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS:

The following steps guide the process for dealing with relational conflict.

Steps	Action for dealing with disputes and complaints
1. Talk directly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When appropriate, either party to the conflict is encouraged to address it directly with the other person or party. Most conflicts are resolved at this level.
2. Request informal assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parties to the conflict/dispute are encouraged to request another person or party to facilitate the conversation, to be present as a listener or as an advocate to carry the concern forward on his/her behalf.
3. Involve supervisors/ administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the conflict involves a person who has a different supervisor/ administrator, both supervisors will become involved in resolving the conflict. If the person has a conflict with her/his supervisor or vice versa and steps one and/or two are not appropriate or have not been successful, the Head of Schools will discern whether the issue is a conflict or a dispute and recommend an appropriate course of action (refer to Policy BD400.004 for dispute resolution). If the conflict is with the Head of Schools, the Board Chair will be approached to map a plan of action to resolve the conflict. Direct supervisors/administrators will be kept informed regarding the process of conflict resolution.
4. Mediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Steps above do not resolve the conflict and if the conflict becomes harmful to the individuals and/or the school, the Head of Schools, in consultation with the Board will determine the merit of engaging a trained third-party mediator. If mediation is not successful and/or one or more of the parties in the conflict are not cooperative, the process will proceed to step five.
5. Appeal/ arbitrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where one party in the conflict is willing and cooperative and the other is not, the willing party may appeal to the Head of Schools for arbitration to resolve the issue. The uncooperative or unwilling party will be informed about the process, expectations and the consequences from the outset. If the Head of Schools is a party in the conflict, the appeal would be directed to the Chair of the Board. The Head of Schools will advise the parties that arbitration procedures will be initiated. The arbitration process as outlined in the Appeal/Arbitration policy will be followed.