



# Conflict Resolution Policy

## Introduction

Christians are called to live Christ-like in all areas of life. This is especially necessary in our dealings with each other. We are called to love each other as Christ loves the Church. However, we realize that we live in a fallen world and that conflicts between individuals sometimes arise in our interactions with each other. We cannot allow conflicts to linger but must be reconciled to one another. Ephesians 4:1-3 says, "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." When trying to resolve conflicts, it is necessary to follow Biblical principles in order to encourage healing.

The person who first becomes aware of the strain in a relationship has the responsibility to seek healing, no matter who is at fault. Matthew speaks to both sides of the issue:

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23,24)*

*"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother." (Matthew 18:15)*

These verses remind us that problems are best dealt with discreetly, and to avoid making the conflict a public matter that may hinder the ultimate reconciliation we want. Publicity fosters gossip.

If there is no reconciliation on a one to one basis, then seek a third party who can serve as mediator or arbitrator.

*"But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses." (Matthew 18:16)*

*"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4)*

*"Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbour frankly so you will not share in his guilt." (Leviticus 19:17)*

The following remarks reflect these values we seek for conflict resolution.

## Main Concepts for Dispute Resolution

Disagreements and conflicts are a constant condition in human relationships. In a Christian community we must deal with each other in good faith, so that most conflicts can be resolved and relationships restored.

The key to successful resolution is proper identification of the problem and accurate direction about the process to be followed in bringing healing. The majority of breaks and frustrations are unnecessarily exaggerated because the process is not understood. Only a few problems are of the sort that are difficult or impossible to resolve because they lead to irreconcilable differences.

Human beings have different commitments and opinions about virtually everything. In a Christian community this diversity should not create alarm or despair, but rather be a source of growth and excitement. Respect for distinct and varied roles and responsibilities is central to restoring relationships.

### Here are some types of disputes in the school setting:

- Employee – Employer
- Parent – Board
- Parent – Staff member

*Note: The whistleblower policy is another policy that may apply when conflicts, disputes or grievances arise. Please refer to the Whistleblower Policy posted in the Policies Section on the website: [www.pickeringcs.on.ca](http://www.pickeringcs.on.ca) under “RESOURCES” with subheading, “Policies”*

## Procedure

1. Speak to the individual you have a conflict with for reconciliation. When proceeding to take this step, the applicant will submit their grievance in writing to the Principal or Chair of the Board, depending on the nature of this conflict, who will have the first opportunity to respond. If the matter has not been resolved to the person's satisfaction please proceed with either of the following steps:
  - a) If the concern is with a *staff member*, you may then proceed to speak to the *Principal*. If the matter has not been resolved to the person's satisfaction, that person (applicant) may bring their evidence forward and elect to file an official grievance to the Chair of the Board. *(Disputes of an employment nature will follow the procedure outlined in the appropriate policy or contract. All other disputes will follow the procedure outlined below:)*
  - b) If the concern is with the *Principal*, you may then proceed to contact the *Chair of the Board*. *(Disputes of an employment nature will follow the procedure outlined in the appropriate policy or contract. All other disputes will follow the procedure outlined below:)*
2. On receipt of a written complaint, the Chair decides, by inquiry if necessary, whether or not the complaint requires a Committee. Complaints are dismissed if the Chair is of the opinion that:
  - i) the complaint is frivolous, trivial, or not in good faith;
  - ii) the complainant has an insufficient interest in the matter;
  - iii) the conduct complained of occurred at too remote a time to justify investigation;

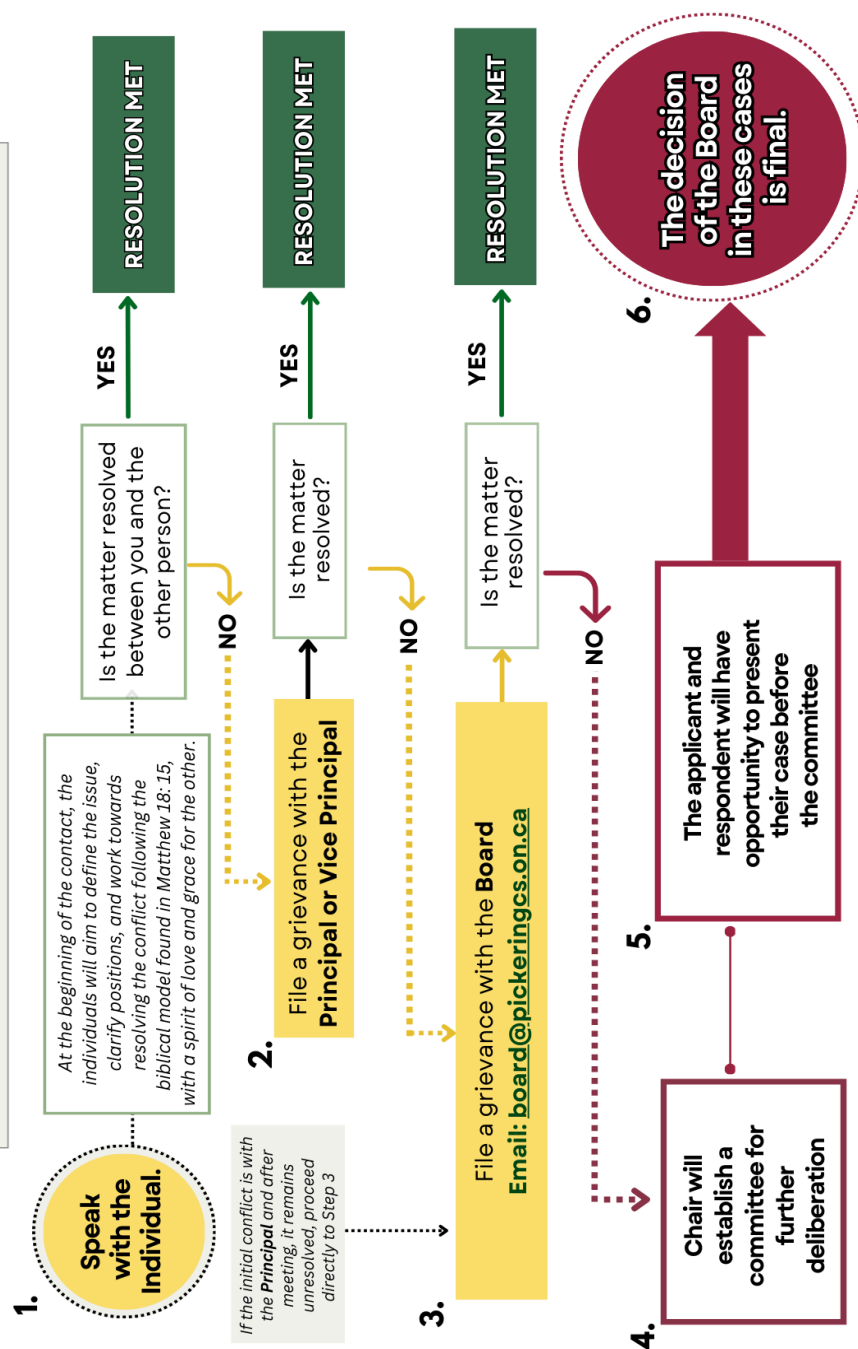
- iv) there is an alternative and satisfactory means of redress available to the complainant; or
  - v) the alleged misconduct does not fall within the function, responsibilities, and policies of the school.
3. If the complaint proceeds, the Chair will forward copies to the Committee members and call a meeting.
- At this meeting,
- vi) The Chair will invite the applicant to present first, then the respondent will present. There will only be questions for clarification allowed at this point.
  - vii) Both parties will be allowed to cross examine each other after initial presentations are done. This must be done respectfully and will be regulated by the Chair. Committee members will also have a chance to ask questions, after which both parties will be dismissed.
  - viii) The Committee will make a decision based on the current Board policy. If policy does not adequately address the issue, a recommendation will be sent to the Board for approval. The Board will deal with the recommendation at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. If the Board meeting is more than one month away OR the Board Chair determines the recommendation must be dealt with in a more timely manner, a special meeting may be called.
  - ix) The Committee will complete a report with the decision. This report will be forwarded to both parties within 48 hours and the Board representative will report to the Board.
4. The decision of the Board in these cases is final.
5. One copy of the report will be filed with the Board documents.

\*Please see the flow chart visual graphic of the proper and approved channels of authority in which to report on the following page.

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

*"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses." -Matthew 18:15-16*

*\* In instances of suspected financial fraud, illegal, unethical business conduct or danger to the health, safety, or well-being of the community, please refer to "Whistleblower Policy."*



This Conflict Resolution Policy approved by the Board of Pickering Christian School, May 2024