

# Facilitation Policy



## 1. Introduction

Conflict is inevitable in a workplace where people work from varying goals and responsibility levels. Sometimes conflict escalates quickly to mediation and arbitration. Such times usually miss the window of opportunity to bring understanding and reconciliation. Instead they bring legal solutions that designate at least one party in the conflict as the loser. We desire to work pro-actively to manage conflict and to prevent its possible negative consequences.

We believe that a Biblical model for conflict resolution directs us to strive for reconciliation and restoration of relationships. We believe that, as a Christian community we must be willing to set aside time and resources to bring about resolutions that are not only right, but also practical for everyone involved in a conflict.

“Facilitation” is a process where-by a facilitator, trained in dispute resolution, provides an avenue where parties in dispute talk about the issues in a forum where each participant will feel they have been heard. The facilitation process is a “low-cost” avenue available to members of our Christian education community who find themselves looking for a way to resolve and understand a conflict that has left them powerless and alone. The process is meant mainly to clarify the issues, to help the parties talk, with the hope that reconciliation is possible even if the parties cannot agree with an action or decision.

Experience has indicated that there is a significant difference between the relatively low profile one-on-one support that the organizations can provide for their members and the much higher profile action described in the Mediation and Arbitration Process. There is a need for an in-between time to development mutual understanding, reconciliation and early resolution, before moving into the field of protocols, legalities, record keeping and paper trails.

The Christian Principals Association of BC, Christian Educators of BC, the and the Society of Christian Schools of BC are committed to working together to help prevent, solve, mediate and arbitrate conflict situations between teachers and other parties in the educational effort.

## 2. Purpose and Intent

### **Workplace Conflict**

Workplace conflict is a condition between or among workers whose jobs are interdependent, who feel angry or upset, who perceive others as being at fault, and who act in ways that cause a problem. When working relationships are disturbed it usually is because of the competencies of the people involved, the structure of the system within which they work, and the culture that influences the workplace behavior.

The cost of workplace conflict can be high. The human cost has to do with personal health, self esteem, job motivation, and the ability to work and interact. The financial cost becomes evident in consequences of wasted time, bad decisions, lost personnel, health cost, restructuring, harm to workplace property, etc.

It is important to recognize that early resolution of conflicts is not only the right thing to do but also the expedient and practical thing for everyone involved.

### **Principles at Work in a Facilitation Process**

The Biblical model of dealing with disagreements and conflicts emphasizes the need for reconciliation in the context of Christian community and discourages the use of lawsuits and adversarial approaches. The Bible recognizes that, on this side of eternity, we will have situations of conflict. It treats those situations

of brokenness as opportunities for God's Spirit to work restoration and healing. All of Christ's teachings and actions emphasize that relationships must be build up and brought together, not brought down or broken apart. (Appendix B)

Consequently, as a community of Christian educators, parents, and learners we work hard to build team relationships that focus on our common goals and benefits. When conflict arises we do not want to be quick to involve lawyers. We want to avoid a system where opposing parties keep records for the purpose of designating a winner and a loser. Rather, we want to involve ourselves in activities that improve communication between people and develop greater understanding of each other's views and motives and needs.

To develop understanding parties must communicate with each other. They must spend time together talking, explaining, expressing, and listening. They also need community support to be able to do this.

This Facilitation Policy assumes that all school-based dispute resolution protocols and procedures have been followed prior to enacting the facilitation option.

### 3. Procedure

#### A. Facilitation – A Conflict Resolution Service Available to CEBC Members\*

A member of the CEBC that is involved in a situation of conflict with administration and/or the Board, and desires to seek resolution of the conflict, is encouraged to follow all the options available to the member as outlined in the member's contract and the school society's "Dispute Resolution Policy."

Once the above options have been exhausted, a member of CEBC has the option of requesting "Facilitation Services" from the office of the CEBC by contacting the Executive Director (ED). **"Facilitation" is a process where-by a facilitator, trained in dispute resolution, will provide an avenue where parties in dispute will have an opportunity to talk about the issues in forum where each participant will feel they have been heard. The "Facilitation" process is a "low-cost" avenue available to CEBC members who find themselves looking for a way to resolve and understand a conflict that has left them powerless and alone.** The process is meant mainly to clarify the issues, to help the parties talk, with the hope that reconciliation is possible even if the parties can not agree with an action or decision.

A request for "Facilitation" will require the following from the:

##### **CEBC Member**

1. Describes verbally the nature of the conflict to the ED by phone
2. Receives explanation of how the facilitation process will work
3. Asks ED to contact the other party to inform him/her of the request for facilitation
4. Agrees to pay 25 percent of costs incurred by CEBC in case facilitation will happen

##### **Executive Director**

1. Receives a phone call from a CEBC member explaining the nature of the conflict
2. Explains how the process of facilitation will work
3. Advises the member whether or not the other party should be contacted to request facilitation
4. Contacts the other party if the teacher does decide to request facilitation

5. Informs the teacher that the other party has been contacted
6. Contacts the facilitator to get the process started
7. Is available to the member for moral and prayer support

#### **Facilitator**

1. Receives a request for facilitation from the ED
2. Initiates contact with both parties that are in conflict to agree on a time and place
3. Brings the parties together in a meeting
4. Ensures that each of the parties has sufficient opportunity to express their concerns
5. Works for reconciliation
6. Elicits from both parties how they would see the matter be resolved

#### **Cost for Financing the “Facilitation”**

1. Facilitator will bill CEBC at \$50.00 per hour for a maximum of \$500.00 per case.
2. Appropriate expenses will be reimbursed.
3. Member in conflict will pay 25 percent of cost.

*\*CEBC members include support staff (Educational Assistants, Special Education Assistant, Preschool staff, Librarians, etc.*

#### **B. Facilitation – A Conflict Resolution Service available to CPABC Members\***

A member of the CPABC who is involved in a situation of conflict with a staff member and/or the Board, and desires to seek resolution of the conflict, is encouraged to follow all the options available to the member as outlined in the member’s contract and the school society’s “Dispute Resolution Policy.”

Once the above options have been exhausted, a member of CPABC has the option of requesting “Facilitation Services” from the office of the SCSBC by contacting the Executive Director (ED).

**“Facilitation” is a process where-by a facilitator, trained in dispute resolution, will provide an avenue where parties in dispute will have an opportunity to talk about the issues in forum where each participant will feel they have been heard. The “Facilitation” process is a “low-cost” avenue available to CPABC members who find them-selves looking for a way to resolve and understand a conflict that has left them powerless and alone.** The process is meant mainly to clarify the issues, to help the parties talk, with the hope that reconciliation is possible even if the parties can not agree with an action or decision.

A request for “Facilitation” will require the following from the:

##### **CPABC Member**

1. Describes verbally the nature of the conflict to the E.D. by phone
2. Receive explanation of how the facilitation process will work
3. Asks ED to contact the other party to inform him/her of the request for facilitation
4. Agrees to pay 25 percent of costs incurred by CPABC in case facilitation will happen

##### **Executive Director**

1. Receives a phone call from a CPABC member explaining the nature of the conflict
2. Explains how the process of facilitation will work
3. Advises the member whether or not the other party should be contacted to request facilitation

4. Contacts the other party if the administrator does decide to request facilitation
5. Informs the administrator that the other party has been contacted
6. Contacts the facilitator to get the process started
7. Is available to the member for moral and prayer support

#### **Facilitator**

1. Receives a request for facilitation from the E.D.
2. Initiates contact with both parties that are in conflict to agree on a time and place
3. Brings the parties together in a meeting
4. Ensures that each of the parties has sufficient opportunity to express their concerns,
5. Works for reconciliation
6. Elicits from both parties how they would see the matter be resolved

#### **Cost for Financing the “Facilitation”**

1. Facilitator will bill CPABC at \$50.00 per hour for a maximum of \$500.00 per case.
2. Appropriate expenses will be reimbursed.
3. Member in conflict will pay 25 percent of cost.

*\* Most CPABC members are also members of CEBC. As such they may opt to work through CEBC to arrange for facilitation.*

### **C. Facilitation – A Conflict Resolution Service Available to Boards of SCSBC Members Schools**

A Board of an SCSBC member school (Employer) who is involved in a situation of conflict with a staff member (Employee) and desires to seek resolution of the conflict is encouraged to follow all the options available to the employee as outlined in the Employee’s contract and the school society’s “Dispute Resolution Policy.”

Once the above options have been exhausted, the Board of an SCSBC member school has the option of requesting “Facilitation Services” from the office of the SCSBC by contacting the SCSBC Executive Director (ED). **“Facilitation” is a process where-by a facilitator, trained in dispute resolution, will provide an avenue where parties in dispute will have an opportunity to talk about the issues in forum where each participant will feel they have been heard. The “Facilitation” process is a “low cost” avenue available to Boards of SCSBC member schools who find themselves looking for a way to resolve and understand a conflict that has left them powerless and alone.** The process is meant mainly to clarify the issues, to help the parties talk, with the hope that reconciliation is possible even if the parties cannot agree with an action or decision.

A request for “Facilitation” will require the following from the:

#### **Board of an SCSBC Member School**

1. Describes verbally the nature of the conflict to the SCSBC ED by phone
2. Receive explanation of how the facilitation process will work
3. Asks SCSBC ED to contact the other party to inform him/her of the request for facilitation
4. Agrees to pay 25 % of costs incurred by SCSBC in the event facilitation occurs

#### **SCSBC Executive Director**

1. Receives a phone call from Board (Chair) of an SCSBC member school explaining the nature of the conflict
2. Explains how the process of facilitation will work
3. Advises the Board of an SCSBC member school whether or not the other party should be contacted to request facilitation
4. Contacts the other party (employee) if the Board does decide to request facilitation
5. Informs the Board chair that the other party has been contacted
6. Contacts the facilitator to get the process started
7. Is available to the Board of an SCSBC member school for moral and prayer support

### **Facilitator**

1. Receive a request for facilitation from the SCSBC ED
2. Initiates contact with both parties that are in conflict to agree on a time and place
3. Brings the parties together in a meeting
4. Ensures that each of the parties has sufficient opportunity to express their concerns,
5. Works for reconciliation
6. Elicits from both parties how they would see the matter be resolved

### **Cost for Financing the “Facilitation”**

1. Facilitator will bill SCSBC at \$50.00 per hour for a maximum of \$500.00 per case.
2. Appropriate expenses will be reimbursed.
3. Board of SCSBC Member School will pay 25% of cost.