

Salinas City Elementary School District

Students

Regulation #5138

CONFLICT RESOLUTION/PEER MEDIATION

To promote student safety and contribute to the maintenance of a positive school climate, the Governing Board encourages the development of school-based conflict resolution programs designed to help students learn constructive ways of handling conflict. District schools may develop a program to reduce violence and promote communication, personal responsibility and problem-solving skills among students.

Conflict resolution strategies may be considered as part of each school's comprehensive safety plan and incorporated into other district discipline procedures as appropriate. Conflict resolution programs shall not supplant the authority of staff to take appropriate action as necessary to prevent violence, ensure student safety, maintain order in the school, and institute disciplinary measures.

Schoolwide programs may include curriculum in conflict resolution, including, but not limited to, instruction in effective communication and listening, critical thinking, problem-solving processes and the use of negotiation to find mutually acceptable solutions. In addition, the curriculum may address students' ethical and social development, respect for diversity, and interpersonal and behavioral skills.

Conflict resolution programs may incorporate peer mediation strategies in which selected students are specially trained to work with their peers in resolving conflicts.

Students' participation in any peer mediation program shall be voluntary and kept confidential by all parties involved.

In developing a conflict resolution and/or peer mediation program, school-site teams may address, as appropriate:

1. The grade levels and courses in which the conflict resolution curriculum shall be delivered
2. Staff development related to the implementation of the curriculum and modeling of appropriate behaviors and communication skills
3. The selection of peer mediators involving, to the extent possible, a cross-section of students in terms of grade, gender, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, and including some students who exhibit negative leadership among peers

Page One of Two

Reference: EC 32230-239, 32295.5, 35291-291.5, Issued: January 24, 2000
EC 44807; CALIF CONSTITUTION Article 1, Section 28(c); CSBA PUBS: Protecting Our
Children: Governing Board Strategies to Combat School Violence, 1999; CSE PUBS:
Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action, 1995; USDE PUBS: Creating Safe and
Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide, 1996; WEB SITES: U.S. Dept of Ed, Safe and Drug
Free Schools Program: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/>; Calif Dept of Ed,
Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/safety/>.
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Page Two

4. Training and support for peer mediators, including training in mediation processes and in the skills related to understanding conflict, communicating effectively and listening
5. The process for identifying and referring students to the peer mediation program
6. The types of conflicts suitable for peer mediation
7. Scheduling and location of peer mediation sessions
8. Methods of obtaining and recording agreement from all disputants
9. The appropriate involvement of parents/guardians, the community and staff, including counseling/guidance and security staff
10. Communications to students, parents/guardians and staff regarding the availability of the program
11. Methods of following up with students to determine the effectiveness of the process
12. Development of assessment tools to periodically evaluate the success of the program including, but not limited to, measurements of whether there has been a reduction in violence at the school and whether the school's suspension rates have fallen since the program has been introduced

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