



Voyageurs Expeditionary High School

Communication Model & Problem Solving Procedure

Communication Model: The ultimate purpose of a communication model is to encourage the growth and development of Voyageurs as a healthy community. Dealing with conflict is a part of any development or growth process and may arise in any community. An effective problem solving and conflict resolution process is therefore an essential component of the communication model.

The Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution Procedure is a model for all members of the Voyageurs community and is designed to address issues among the following: Between parents and staff, parents and administration, staff and administration, and staff and staff.

Four Major Areas of Communication: Conflicts may fall into one of four major areas (or may be a combination of these areas) as listed below.

1. Policy and Legal Issues

Current policies are available in the school office. Reviewing policies lends information that may at times solve a conflict. The Board at Voyageurs has final approval on all governance issues. Issues of policy should be addressed directly to the Voyageurs Expeditionary High School Board.

2. Procedures/Daily Operations

The director shall establish procedures designed to carry out the policies adopted by the Board. Procedures pertain to anything regarding the daily operations of Voyageurs. An office staff member or the director can clarify procedures. The director serves as the primary administrator of the school. Any daily operations/procedural issues should be addressed directly to the director.

3. Pedagogy

Pedagogical issues pertain to anything that occurs in the classroom, i.e. teaching, curriculum, classroom management, or teacher-student relationships. Pedagogical issues should be addressed directly to the class teacher.

4. Interpersonal Communication and Relationships

Concerns between people or communication breakdown should be directly communicated with the person(s) involved. In addition, communication and relationship issues can surface in conjunction with policy and procedural issues or pedagogical issues.

The overall purpose of this procedure is to perpetuate a climate of collegiality, mutual trust and respect by resolving differences in a timely, objective, and equitable manner.

If concerns or conflicts regarding policies and procedures, pedagogy, and or community members are not resolved after following the procedures described under “Four Major Areas of Communication”, direct communication lines should be employed.

These communication lines are the vehicles that Voyageurs uses to resolve conflict within our community as they arise. These pathways form a structure and process that encourage parties involved in a conflict to reach resolution. *It is emphasized that the first step in resolution of conflicts in our community is direct communication with the involved parties.* The following steps should then be initiated if issues are not resolved.

Problem Solving Procedures

Goals:

1. Provide for effective handling of issues
2. Provide a clear process to those who believe they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their rights under current school policies.

Step 1: Direct Resolution: If staff/community members/parents have a question or concern, they are encouraged to go directly to the person(s) involved.

Step 2: Administrative Resolution: The administrative resolution process consists of a meeting between the parties involved with the director in attendance. An attempt at administrative resolution is to be made prior to requesting a formal resolution. If issues involve the director, proceed to step 3.

Step 3. Formal Resolution: Formal resolution consists of the submission of a problem-solving report to the Voyageurs Problem Solving Committee. The Problem Solving Committee is a standing committee consisting of 3 current board members, and is selected annually at the May board meeting. Members of this committee will receive mediation training and will offer unbiased consideration on the issues brought before them. A problem-solving report may be obtained from the board chairperson and submitted within 10 working days of the administrative resolution meeting. The Problem Solving Committee will then take one of the following actions within 5 working days of receiving the report.

- A. Determine that the issue calls for a change in board policy or procedures or that current policy have not been adequately followed. The committee will recommend a plan of correction action to the board or director.
- B. Conclude that the issue is personal opinion by an individual or small group of individuals and that changing policy or taking action based upon this opinion would not be in the best interest of the school community.
- C. Seek further mediation on the issue

To initiate a problem solving procedure, you must complete the Problem-Solving Report located in the office.

