

Mediation Policy

Mediation is the process by which participants, together with the assistance of neutral persons within the school community peer group, systematically isolated disputed issues in order to develop options, consider alternatives, and reach a consensual settlement that will accommodate their needs. Mediation is a process that emphasises the participants' own responsibility for making decisions that affect their lives. It is this self powering aspect of mediation that establishes mediation as an important tool in the fostering of self regulation, self-esteem and self discipline.

Outcomes of a school based mediation program

The school community develops a more receptive view of conflict as a positive force that can accompany personal growth or institutional changes.

The school community members know themselves and others through improved communication.
An improved school climate.

Mediator training results in development of skills essential for learning.

- Ability to listen
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking

A higher level of awareness of community and citizen ship issues through understanding non-adversarial conflict resolution, its relationship to the legal system and its potential for achieving peace.

An ability of students to resolve their own disputes.

An additional and effective strategy for reducing violence, vandalism and truancy, providing an alternative to traditional methods of management such as exclusion, suspension or detention.

Underlying Principles

- ◆ Mediators are impartial
- ◆ Confidentiality is preserved
- ◆ Mediators are not concerned with assigning blame
- ◆ The emphasis is on negotiation
- ◆ Individual outcomes are sought
- ◆ Feelings are as important as, or more important, than facts
- ◆ Full disclosure is required
- ◆ Openness is encouraged
- ◆ Empowered parties must find their own solutions

PEER MEDIATION AGREEMENT

Peer Mediators _____

Date _____

Briefly describe the conflict

Type of conflict (tick one)

Rumour

Threat

Name Calling

Loss of property

Other (write details)

The students whose signatures appear below met with two Peer mediators and with the assistance of those mediators reached the following agreement.

Disputant _____

Agrees to _____

Disputant _____

Agrees to _____

We have made and signed this agreement because we believe it resolves the conflict(s) between us.

Disputant's Signature

Disputant's Signature

Mediator's Signature

Mediator's Signature

OFFICE USE – COPIES TO

Referral person

Year Adviser

Admin

Other (Name)

THE ROLE OF THE COORDINATOR

The coordinator's role is voluntary and therefore requires commitment to student welfare and the peer mediation process. The role of the coordinator includes the following:

◆ Managing the Peer Mediation program in the school	Senior Executive
◆ Establishing guidelines for the selection of mediators	Counsellor
◆ Selecting students to be trained as peer mediators	Counsellor
◆ Organising a suitable room and furniture	Senior Executive
◆ Providing paper, pens etc for mediation	Top Office
◆ Providing referral slips to Head Teacher Welfare, Year Advisers and others as appropriate	School Coordinator
◆ Providing Agreement Forms for mediation	School Coordinator
◆ Scheduling mediation	School Coordinator
◆ Logging resolutions in diary	School Coordinator
◆ Reporting to school executive	Senior Executive and counsellor
◆ Up-grading mediators' training on a regular basis	Counsellor
◆ Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the program	All parties
◆ Raising awareness and promoting the program to the whole school community	Senior Executive and counsellor

TYPES OF DISPUTES MEDIATED IN NSW SCHOOLS

- Gossip and rumours
- Name calling and teasing
- Problems involving relationships between students
- Bullying and threats
- Fighting
- Territorial power struggles
- Loss of property
- Disputes involving family members

TYPES OF DISPUTES NOT MEDIATED

- Sexual assault
- Violence involving a weapon
- Illegal substances
- Or any other compulsory notification