



DSK Anliegen- und Lösungsverfahren / DSK Concerns Resolution Procedure

With reference to:

- Parental contract 5.2._I - Declaration by parents / legal guardians
- Code of conduct valid for all students
- Employment contract and code of conduct for employees and teachers (SACE Code of Professional Ethics)
- All applicable codes of conduct and regulations of the DSK

Introduction

A positive school environment is an important basis for good cooperation equally for students, parents, legal guardians, teachers and employees of the school. This provides the basis for an optimal teaching and learning experience. An important prerequisite for such a positive school environment is target-oriented communication - characterized by mutual appreciation and respectful interaction.

Constructive and equally critical feedback is welcome within the DSK family, as it forms the basis for improvement and further development of all those involved and thus can and should contribute to improve the school climate. We define feedback as suggestions for improvement, concerns and complaints that are specifically related to the school (whereas the scope of application is also determined by the applicable regulations of the DSK).

All teachers receive feedback from students at least once or twice per school year using appropriate questionnaires. This is a proactive approach to identify challenges in daily teaching and learning or in personal interaction and to achieve jointly amicable solutions, to defuse or prevent conflicts or misunderstandings. Nevertheless, there can be situations or conflicts in school life that cannot be avoided or resolved at above-mentioned level.

The following procedure, which was developed by representatives of the school community, is intended to ensure that conflicts can be recognized at an early stage, communicated and dealt with respectfully and comprehensibly by all those involved. The procedure is intended to support continued trusting cooperation and to resolve conflicts promptly, transparently and fairly.

The following procedure is designed flexibly in awareness of potentially different power dynamics between the parties involved (due to age, position in the school system, language, gender, ethnicity, origin, etc.). Thus, such dynamics can be balanced out as best as possible (e.g. through representation, anonymity or the option to consult experts). All those involved must be aware of potential power dynamics and - if appropriate in individual cases - counteract as far as possible

in the interests of fairness (e.g. by choosing the place, time, language and the person(s) called in, paying attention to speaking time and order of speech, sensitive inquiries, open and sincere listening, if necessary breaking off and calling on support or experts, etc.).

Procedure to resolve the concern:

- A. *The following procedure may be deviated from if the severity of the incident warrants direct escalation. For help in assessing the severity, please refer to the applicable DSK regulations or guidelines or contact the class teacher, HOD, graduate leader, Star Center, teacher council, SRC, liaison teacher or school management.
Moderate or repeated incident → Head of Department or senior management;
Serious or repeated moderate incident → school management (see also examples in individual regulations, see diagram for conflict resolution).¹*
- B. *Both parties can call in a representative for support (e.g. from the student body, college, SRC, Star Center, parent council) or they can be represented and remain anonymous (exception: disciplinary proceedings), if this is appropriate and necessary.*
 - a. The addressee agrees that the complainant remains anonymous. If this is not the case, no informal further processing takes place.
 - b. There is clear, unequivocal evidence that makes it unnecessary to identify the complainant.
 - c. In all other cases, in particular disciplinary prosecution is only possible if the addressee has the identity of the complainant.
- C. *Minute keeping will generally be done by the person bringing up the matter (or his/ her representative). The addressee can contradict this, whereupon a neutral person is appointed to take the minutes by mutual agreement. Both parties must agree to the minutes or note their differing positions accordingly.*
- D. *Feedback to those involved with the result takes place after each phase within the specified timeline.*
- E. *If partial steps require more time on the part of a person involved, he/ she needs to inform the other parties involved in the process of the delay and give a new date in the near future.*
- F. *During each investigation of a grievance, care will be taken that neither the person that brings up the matter nor the aggrieved person are disadvantaged, and that the position of other parties is not prejudiced if the grievance is found to be groundless.*
- G. *The involvement of external experts should be limited to the following cases:*
 - a. If the situation is unclear or if there is obviously no in-house expertise available to assess a situation or if the internal expert may have a conflict of interest or a duty of confidentiality
 - b. Processes / complaints that may contain serious disciplinary measures or (labor) legal consequences

¹ Head of Department -> pedagogic leadership (e.g. technical questions and methods) / Head of Grade -> e.g. Discipline and problems on relationship levels

Phase	Beschreibung	Beteiligte	Timeline c)
1) Submitting the request to the addressee, attempting to reach an agreement and a written summary ² .	<p>A) Students, parents, DSK employees and teachers can communicate and attempt to resolve the incidents related to the concern directly with the person concerned to ensure that they have the correct facts and understanding of the incident. In principle, a person of trust can be nominated by the person concerned, either to provide assistance or to represent the person in the conversation.</p> <p>B) The addressee has the opportunity to comment on the concern and, if necessary, to suggest steps to remedy the situation (obligation to improve, verbal / written apology, reparation, etc.). The parties try to come to an agreement in a respectful exchange.</p> <p>C) Written summary: preparation of minutes of the matter. To be signed by both parties. If one party is not satisfied with the result, this is documented in the minutes.</p> <p>D) Agreement/ completion of the first step or transition to phase 2.</p>	<p>All parties involved in the conflict and / or their representatives³</p> <p>minutes⁴</p>	
2) Escalation in case of non-agreement	<p>If the parties involved have not come to an agreement, the next higher instance is called in / consulted with the aim of finding an amicable solution.</p> <p>The escalation levels are basically:</p>	2) Escalation in case of non-agreement	1 Schulwoche

² Phase 1 can be skipped if necessary in the case of serious concerns

³ If necessary, the complainant can remain anonymous (except for disciplinary proceedings)

⁴ No footnote or comment given in German sheet - footnote could be deleted then?

	<p>addressee = student</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Class teacher II. Head of Grade III. School Management IV. School board <p>addressee = teacher</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Class teacher II. Head of Department III. Head of Grade IV. School Management V. School board <p>addressee = employee</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Supervisor II. HR III. School Management IV. School board <p>addressee = parent/ legal guardian</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Class teacher II. School Management III. School Board <p>If due to the nature or circumstances of the matter appropriate and necessary, steps can be skipped, or other sources consulted, e.g., the Star Center, counselling teacher, teacher council or parent representative or parent council. The need for support (from other authorized bodies or internal / external experts) is measured by the authority involved and can be assigned accordingly if necessary.⁵</p>		
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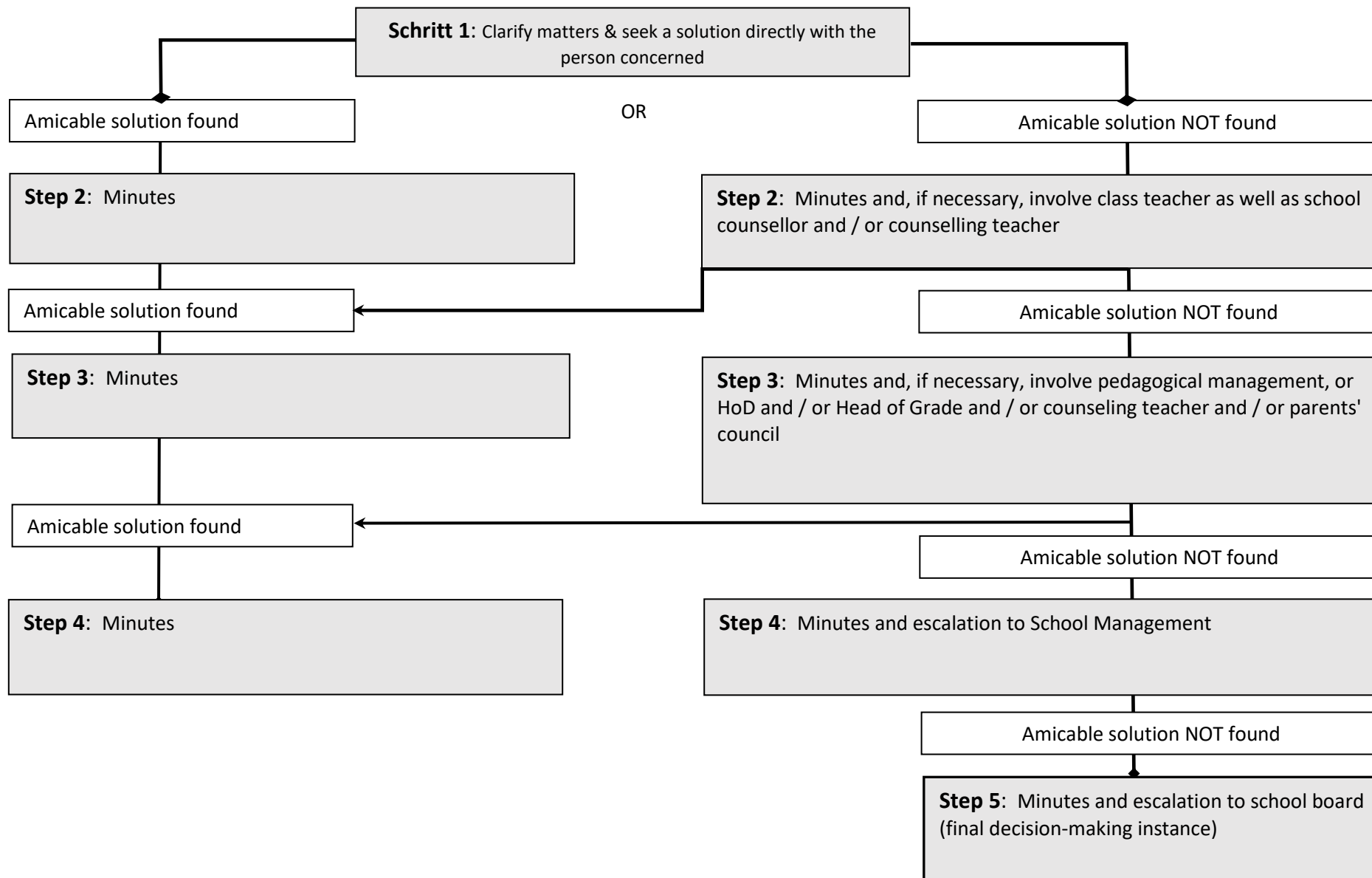
⁵ Please refer to the below Flow Chart for conflict resolution

3) Investigation, clarification and fact check	The competent authority (depending on the escalation level, see phase 2) examines the issue, collects facts, interviews those involved and witnesses (if applicable).	Competent authority Affected person possible witnesses	1 week
4) Written summary of the results of the review phase, assessment and actions	Suggested steps and actions, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No further action - Educational measures, raising awareness, training (skills building) - Mediation (resolution activities, restorative steps) - Counselling - Disciplinary measures⁶ - Consultation of experts (internal or external) - Passing on/ informing the law enforcement authorities <p>Dates for the implementation and evaluation of the measure are set.</p>	Competent authority	Ideally within 2 working days (not applicable to disciplinary measures)
5) Feedback	The complainant will be informed of the result of the examination (evaluation of the severity and category of measures, see example below). The addressee is informed about the assessment and the measures that have been decided.	Competent authority	2 days
6) Escalation in the event of dissatisfaction / objections	If one of the parties does not agree with the decision made, the next higher authority is called in/ consulted (see phase 2). In case of disciplinary measures (e.g., exclusion from school, dismissal), the corresponding regulations (code of conduct, employment contract, parental contract, etc.) apply.	All parties involved	1 week

⁶ Disciplinary measures are only applicable to those bodies mentioned in the code of conduct or the school association's statutes.

7) Implementation of measures	Steps that have been decided will be completed within the stipulated time.	Depending on measure	Depending on measure
8) Evaluation	Participants are invited to provide written feedback on the process and result; Opportunity for a feedback discussion. If necessary, further escalation (see phase 2)	Competent authority invites and receives feedback; Complainant or representative and addressee give feedback	1 week
9) Report and Tracking	Minute logs of all completed phases are stored in the personnel file (POPIA compliant) of both parties involved (complainant - if known - and addressee) unless the parties involved mutually decide otherwise (only applicable for minor cases). A copy will be sent to both parties. Anonymous key data of the cases (category, severity, justified or not, agreement reached or not, measures taken, feedback from those involved) is collected in a secure, access restricted, central DSK database in order to identify trends and systemic problems and to be able to address them appropriately.	Administration	After each phase

Flow chart conflict resolution



**Statement of person who raised the concern:
Response / Reaction Recipient to the concern:**

Standards application to the incident / concern:

Aimed solution and reason for meeting:

Concern: Solution found
Not agreed, follow process of flow chart.
Next steps and timeline?

Solution not found

Date of Feedback - If applicable: _____

Keeper of minutes: _____

- ❖ This meeting form must be sent to all participants as well as the Head of Grade/ responsible supervisor, with the request of the parents/ legal guardians to give their consent to the completeness of the minutes. In this case, the confirmation e-mail counts as a "signature".

Signature
(person who raised the concern)

Signature
(person who was addressed)
