WEST VANCOUVER
SCHOOL DISTRICT
The premier place for learning.

MEMORANDUM

THE TEACHER / TEACHER ASSISTANT RELATIONSHIP

Background

Both Teachers and Teacher Assistants are employees of the Board. However, by definition, a Teacher Assistant works with a Teacher and under the Teacher's direction. It is the Teacher as a professional who sets the parameters, but the classroom Teacher, District support professional staff, and the para-professional Teacher Assistant should work cooperatively in the spirit of a team supporting the students assigned to the Teacher. It is recognized that both the Teacher and Teacher Assistant may have specialized skill and knowledge in relationship to a specific student or condition.

This protocol is designed as a guide to maintain healthy relationships between staff members.

Basic Assumptions on Roles and Responsibilities

1. Administrative Officers of the District have the right and responsibility to evaluate and supervise the staff assigned to a school.
2. Teachers exercise their professional responsibilities and judgments in the operation of their classroom. They do not have a duty to formally evaluate Teacher Assistants, although they have a professional responsibility to make clear to Assistants supporting their classroom what is expected and what standards are appropriate.
3. All employees are entitled to due process.
4. When any member of a working team feels that there is an inappropriate occurrence or circumstance, the first responsibility is to speak openly to the other team member(s) to clarify issues and seek solutions, except where the issue at hand may involve student abuse, criminal activity or where the concerned staff member does not consider the situation to be personally safe. In these cases, District protocol for these matters must be followed.
5. Should this fail to resolve the issue, the Teacher and/or Teacher Assistant should inform the Teacher and/or Teacher Assistant with whom they have an unresolved issue, that they are seeking administrative assistance to address this issue, or contact their respective Association representative for advice/guidance.

6. As a courtesy to one another, Teachers and Teacher Assistants should only speak to an Administrative Officer after they have informed the other party they wish to do this and after the processes in #4 have been employed.
7. The responsibility to communicate issues to parents rests solely with Teachers and Administrators.

Protocol for Problem-Solving Issues that Arise in the Teacher / Teacher Assistant Relationship

1. Whenever possible, issues or concerns which arise should be discussed between the Teacher(s) and Teacher Assistant(s) involved before any reference is made to an Administrative Officer.

2. If issues or concerns are brought to an Administrative Officer by parents or students, the appropriate Teacher(s) and/or Teacher Assistant(s) should be informed.

3. If issues cannot be resolved among the parties involved, the respective parties should contact their respective Association for advice/guidance or inform, the respective party that they intend to seek Administrative assistance.

4. If issues cannot be resolved among the parties involved, the Administrative Officer should evoke a process of conflict resolution involving all parties. If resolution cannot be achieved, a formal process should ensue.

5. A formal meeting should be facilitated by an Administrative Officer with the goal being the exploration of the nature of issues. Both Teachers and Teacher Assistants present at such a meeting should be accompanied by a representative. If an individual does not wish to have a representative present, it will be the duty of the Administrative Officer to inform the respective Association of this fact. At the request of either Association, and with the agreement of the Administrative Officer, other Board employees may be invited to either facilitate or attend such meetings for the purpose of problem-solving.

6. If such a meeting results in a determination that the areas of focus lie primarily with the Teacher Assistant, then a subsequent meeting should be held with the Assistant and his/her representative. If the focus lies primarily with the Teacher, then a subsequent meeting should be held with the Teacher and his/her representative.

7. Strategies developed at the meetings identified in #6 may result in approaches such as mentorship, a growth plan for additional training or consideration of a change of assignment and/or location.

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1. Teacher/Supervisor needs to supervise:
   - make duties / expectations clear;
   - make standards clear.

2. Teachers need to communicate concerns to Teacher Assistant (or vice versa) in an effort to resolve the issue(s).

3. If issues cannot be resolved among the parties involved, the respective parties should contact their respective Association for advice/guidance or inform, the respective party that they intend to seek Administrative assistance.

4. If resolution is not achieved at Step 3, an Administrator may convene all Teacher(s)/Teacher Assistant(s) involved to try to attempt to resolve the issues. If that does not work, Steps 5 and 6 would be followed.

5. Formal meeting with representation:
   - Administrator;
   - Teacher Assistant or Teacher;
   - Teacher Assistant Representative or Teacher Representative.

6. Reconvene Step 3 to set out plan of action which may include, but is not limited to, additional training, support with conflict resolution, mediation or voluntary transfer.

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MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

between

The West Vancouver Municipal Employees' Association

and

The West Vancouver Teachers' Association

The official original copies were signed on behalf of the parties and dated for reference on the 28th day of February 1997. The document was re-signed June 21, 2010, and on February 6 2012.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE WEST VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

Bruce Scott, Business Manager
WVMEA

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE WEST VANCOUVER TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Robert Millard, President
WVTA

Witnessed by:

Warren Hicks, Assistant Superintendent
School District 45 (West Vancouver)

(Date): Feb. 6, 2012.