Conflict Resolution Cheat Sheet

A quick-reference guide for educators to navigate interpersonal and workplace disagreements constructively.

THE 8-STEP FRAMEWORK

1. Identify Positions

Clarify what each party is explicitly demanding or stating out loud. Keep objective notes on the visible issue.

2. Learn the True Needs

Look beneath the surface positions. Uncover underlying motivations, fears, operational obstacles, or personal values.

3. Ask Clarifying Questions

Gather neutral context. Actively strip away assumptions and emotional projections to locate facts.

4. Brainstorm Possible Solutions

Collaboratively list creative remedies. Suspend all judgment, evaluation, or criticism during this phase.

5. Discuss Consequences & Compromises

Weigh the impact of each idea on students, scheduling, and workloads. Identify reasonable, fair concessions.

6. Agree Upon a Solution

Select a balanced path forward that addresses the core underlying needs of both sides rather than just surface demands.

7. Implement Solutions

Actively execute the agreed terms. Assign clear actions, timelines, and responsibilities.

8. Re-evaluate Solutions

Set a specific follow-up date to check progress. Modify the arrangement if real-world school logistics require adjustments.

DE-ESCALATION TOOLKIT

Core Ground Rules

- **Focus on the issue**, not the personality.
- **Listen actively** without planning your rebuttal.
- **Validate feelings** before jumping to fixes.

Clarifying Prompts

- To surface true needs:

  "What aspect of this situation impacts your day-to-day workload the most?"

- To move past positions:

  "Help me understand what an ideal resolution looks like from your perspective."

Constructive Phrasing

- Instead of blaming:

  "I feel overwhelmed when resources are shared late because it affects my prep time."

- To build alignment:

  "Let's figure out a middle ground that keeps our students supported."