

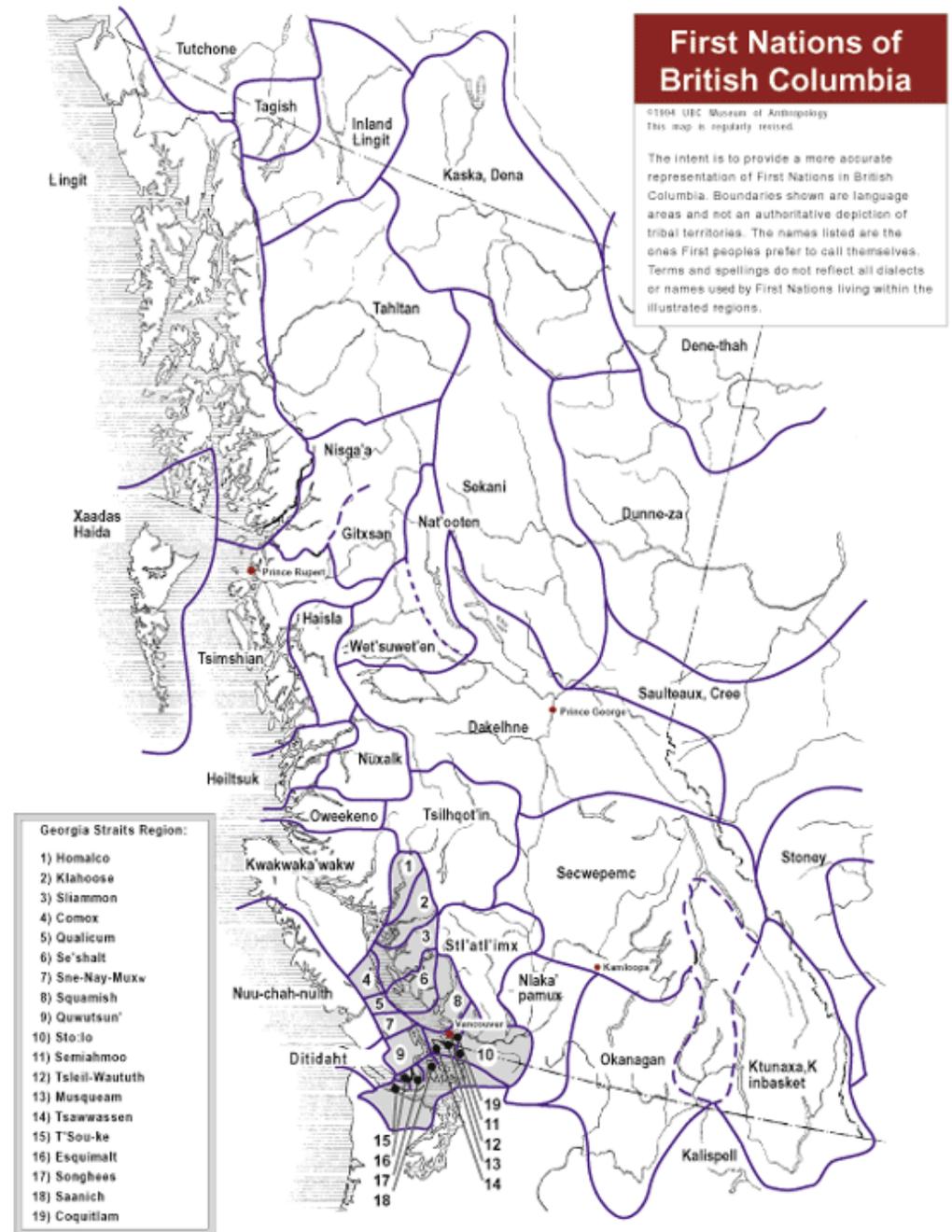
You, Your Child and Your Teacher – A Partnership

TRISH MUGFORD, TEACHER & PARENT, BCTF

ANDREA SINCLAIR, BOARD MEMBER & PARENT, BCCPAC

We would like to acknowledge that we meet here today on the unceded and traditional Territory of the Musqueam, Tsleil Waututh, and Squamish Coast Salish peoples.

Acknowledgment of Aboriginal Territory



Who We Are

Andrea Sinclair

- Long-time Vancouver resident, public education advocate and parent of two children in high school.
- 2nd Vice President of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC),
- Member at Large on Sir Charles Tupper Secondary PAC
- Was a founding member of the Parent Advocacy Network (PAN)

Trish Mugford

- Born and (mostly) raised in Vancouver and has both attended, and taught in, Vancouver high schools
- Passionate advocate for public education and has three children – two in high school, one at university
- Taught at Magee Secondary for 26 years, was 2nd Vice President of the VSTA
- Currently at Vancouver Technical Secondary as District Transition Teacher, supporting literacy and numeracy
- Member of the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice as a Status of Women Rep and a BCTF Parent Presenter at PAC meetings

Our Session

Managing the natural triangle of the parent–child–teacher relationship can be challenging for everyone

- Communications is key and, whenever possible, should include the child
- Building “child-centered” relationships is important
- Student success is at the core
- Tools and strategies

Communications or Advocacy?

- These are inter-related but unique and can be used separately and combined
- Communications = *“a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior”*
- Advocacy = *“public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy”*
- Both are on a continuum where there are both large and small actions and there are multiple actions and interactions
- Relationships take time to build and they evolve over time

Example: BCTF Code of Ethics

1. The member speaks and acts toward students with respect and dignity, and deals judiciously with them, always mindful of their individual rights and sensibilities.
2. The member respects the confidential nature of information concerning students and may give it only to authorized persons or agencies directly concerned with their welfare.
3. A privileged relationship exists between members and students. The member refrains from exploiting that relationship for material, ideological, or other advantage.
4. The member is willing to review with colleagues, students, and their parents/guardians the practices employed in discharging the member's professional duties.
5. The member directs any criticism of the teaching performance and related work of a colleague to that colleague in private. If the member believes that the issue(s) has not been addressed, they may, after privately informing the colleague in writing of their intent to do so, direct the criticism in confidence to appropriate individuals who can offer advice and assistance.

Communications and Advocacy

Communication and advocacy require five key elements:

- Mutual Respect
- Generous/Active Listening
- Facts
- Compromise or Alternate Solutions
- Process and Protocols

Parents are their Childs' Advocate

- Parents are their child's natural advocate, ensuring their child's rights, needs and opinions are respected.
- Parents can also help make sure decisions affecting their child are made fairly.
- Advocacy is about finding a successful solution for the benefit of the child
- BUT children also need to learn to advocate and communicate for themselves
- Resist the urge to automatically "solve" all your child's issues at school

Getting to Know Each Other

- The start of each school year is like opening night of a new play but with new actors doing a repeat performance
- You are new to the teacher, the child is new to the teacher and in turn the teacher is new to you both
- All relationships require time to develop and they take work by all involved

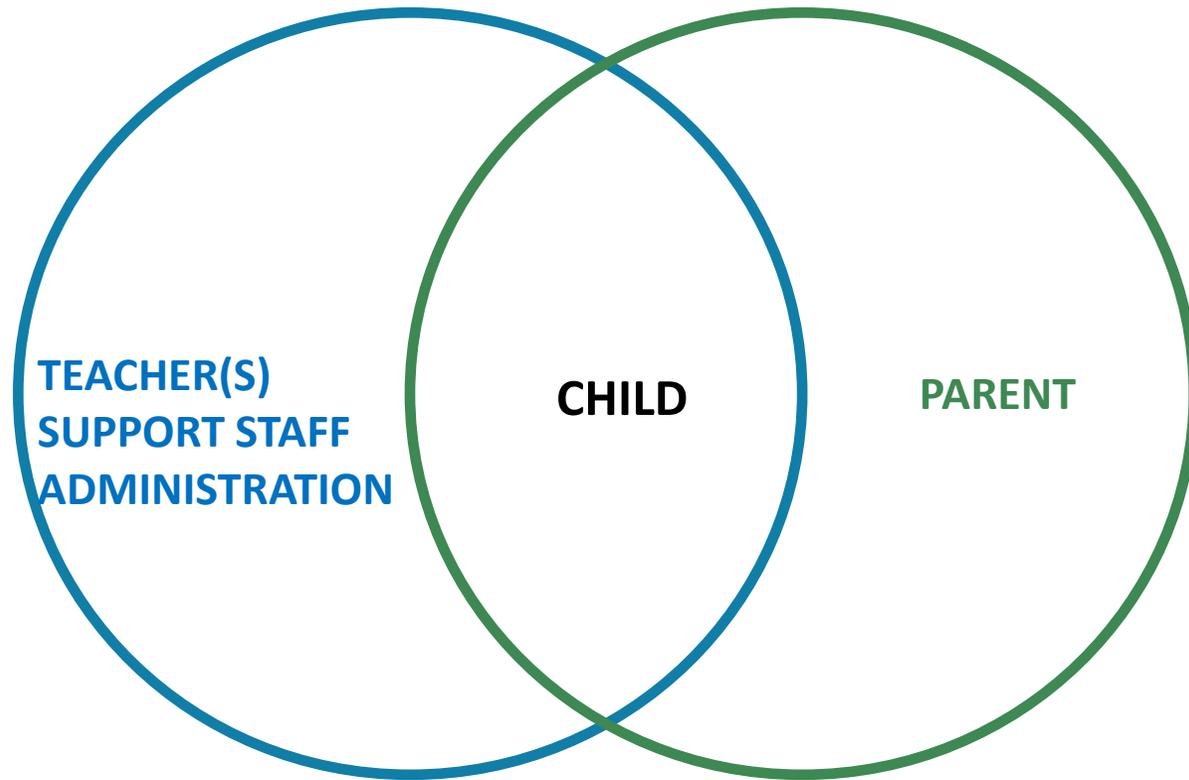
Vulnerability and Empathy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AO6n9HmG0qM>

Relationships

- Built over time through trust, respect, listening
- Recognize the positives – don't wait for an issue to connect
- You each will see both same and different sides to your child

Partnership for the Success of your Child



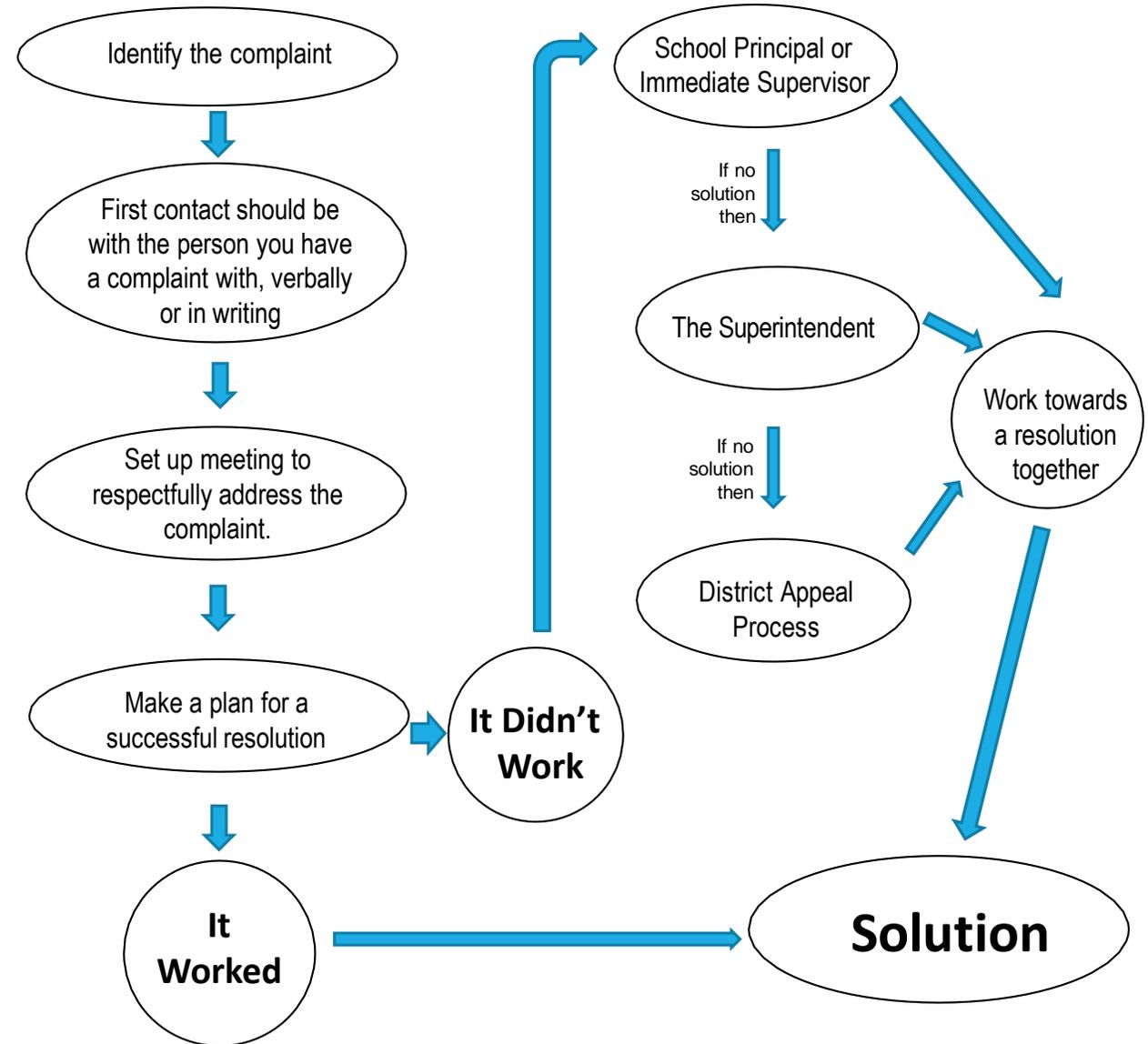
Parent Resources

- School PACs, district PACs, and provincial [BCCPAC](#)
- [Codes of Conduct](#) – student, school, district
- Know what the policies, processes and procedures are in your district – For example: [Vancouver School Board Policy](#) or [Vernon School District](#)
- [BCTF for Parents](#)

Tools and Strategies

- Clear, open and honest communication, even if there's no issue or problem
- What to do when you encounter a “road block”?
- What is appropriate first step?
- What are you trying to solve and what is important?
- Do you have all the facts?
- Appropriate communication tools for the moment

Navigating the Process



Scenario 1

- Your 10 year old son comes home and tells you he is being picked on by another student in the classroom and on the playground.
- He tells you that although the teacher and the supervision aides know about it they haven't taken steps to protect him.
- Today is the last straw: he found a perfect cardboard box in the recycling bin that the teacher has told him he can take home to use for an upcoming project. His classmate nemesis grabbed the box after school and it was ruined in the ensuing struggle.

Scenario 2

- Your daughter is in Grade 10 and is struggling in her English class.
- To efficiently communicate grades to students the teacher has posted the term marks prior to the report card being issued.
- Although there are no names (students are identified by their student number only) your daughter believes that everyone has figured out her mark and is embarrassed about it.

Scenario 3

- Your child has an average of 2-3 hours of homework every evening and is often spending one full day on the weekend completing required assignments.
- You think this is far too much time.
- Your child is in elementary school – what do you do?
Or your child is in secondary school – what next?

We Thank You!

Questions?