

## CONVERSATIONAL CULTURE AT EBERT

### A communication guide for the Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasium (as of 10/22)



#### Preamble

The joint search for the best developmental opportunities for the children is what parents and teachers have in common: they act as educational partners in this process. Initiating and shaping appropriate cooperation in which all participants can contribute their different experiences, interests and expectations equally, means, that the ideas about cooperation are not dictated unilaterally by the school, but are developed and negotiated jointly by parents and teachers equally. Acting on equal terms, entering a relationship based on partnership, introducing the different demands in a joint process and negotiating agreements - all this constitutes the quality of participatory and democratic school development.

#### 1. Information and consulting services

In order to be able to communicate and negotiate interests on an equal basis, all those involved in the process must have the same essential information. Therefore, the Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasium involves parents and guardians in the work and development of the school through regular information and consultation services. The following offers - which are only a selection - are intended to ensure successful communication by establishing a common level of knowledge about important events and stages of school life. These include:

- **Pedagogical class conferences** (2× / school year)
- **Class parents' evenings** (2× / school year)
- **Information evenings**, e.g. in
  - a) Grade 5: Foreign language choice for 6th grade
  - b) Grade 7: Middle school electives
  - c) Grade 8: Internship in the 9th grade
  - d) Grade 10: Profile senior grades
- **Learning development talks** (1× / school year)
- **School career talks** (on demand)
- **Individual meetings with subject teachers** (on demand)
- **Parents' General Meeting** (1× / school year)
- **Parent council meetings** (monthly, usually open to the public)
- **School conferences** (4× / school year, usually open to the public)
- **Letters to parents from the school leadership team** (event-related)
- **Open days** (2× / school year)
- **Homepage**, e.g.
  - a) Information about the educational focus at the Ebert-Gymnasium
  - b) Information on learning opportunities / internal school curricula ("Curricula")
  - c) Ebert FAQs in several languages
  - d) Flyer "Short & sweet" in several languages
  - e) Organization chart with contact persons at Ebert-Gymnasium
- **School brochure, annual report, etc.**

## 2. Communication channels

Finding the right contact person at school for your own concerns is not always easy. If you are unsure who the right contact person is for a question or concern, you should always contact the class teacher first. The class teacher will then assist parents and guardians in finding the right contact person. In the case of concrete concerns and clear responsibilities, parents can also contact the appropriate person directly - the following overview provides an initial orientation:

<b>Request</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Questions about the general <b>development</b> of the students and about <b>education</b>	Class Teacher
Questions about the <b>learning behavior and performance</b> of the students and about the <b>subject</b>	Subject Teacher
Advice on <b>school career</b>	Class Teacher / Head of Department
Counseling in <b>crisis situations</b>	Class Teacher / School Counsellor (Kathrin Lucht, Lone Baumann: <b>beratung@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about the <b>after-school program</b>	After-school program coordinator (Dr. Marco Möller: <b>marco.moeller@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about support for <b>Dyslexia</b>	Language Learning Counsellor (Heidi Aßmann: <b>heidi.assmann@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about the <b>promotion of special talents</b>	Specialist for gifted education (Cornelia Freitag: <b>cornelia.freitag@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about <b>Inclusion</b>	Special education teacher (Olga Bichel: <b>olga.bichel@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about the <b>tutorial classes</b>	Tutorial classes coordinator (Nicole Kroog: <b>nicole.kroog@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about <b>the choice of profession and field of study</b>	BOSO Coordinator (Ulrich Schram: <b>ulrich.schram@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about <b>Student exchanges</b>	USA: Julia Lindheim ( <b>julia.kurtz-lindheim@ebert-net.eu</b> ) England: Birgit Hümpel ( <b>birgit.huempel@ebert-net.eu</b> ) France: Michael Milde ( <b>michael.milde@ebert-net.eu</b> ) Spain: Stephanie Weber ( <b>stephanie.weber@ebert-net.eu</b> ) Poland: Michael Milde ( <b>michael.milde@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about the <b>STEM branch</b>	Head of STEM Department (Franziska Frisch: <b>franziska.frisch@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about the <b>Music branch</b>	Head of Music Department (Bernhard Klein: <b>bernhard.klein@ebert-net.eu</b> )
Questions about <b>Social Learning</b>	School social workers: <b>christina.brückmann@ebert-net.eu</b> <b>marin.dittrich@ebert-net.eu</b>

**The department managers** are also happy to provide information within the scope of their areas of responsibility and can be contacted directly for this purpose:

**Head of Department Lower School 5-7/IVK      Dominik Garcke (dominik.garcke@ebert-net.eu)**

- **Organization / pedagogical conception** concerning the years 5-7 & IVK
- Organization of the elective courses in years 6/7
- Project Management Digital Learning
- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of learning development discussions
- Organization of the open house and information evenings for the parents of fourth graders.
- Cooperation with the surrounding elementary schools
- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of the learning level surveys 5-7

**Head of Department Middle School 8-10      Markus Klein (markus.klein@ebert-net.eu)**

- **Organization / pedagogical conception** concerning the years 8-10
- **Quality development management**
- Project Management **Talent Pilots**
- Organization of the elective courses of the years 8-10
- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of the examinations in year 10 (sÜ10 / MSA)
- Coordination of **stays abroad** & advice for students and parents
- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of learning development discussions
- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of the learning level surveys 8-10

**Head of Department Upper School 11-12      Jewgenia Sprenger (jewgenia.sprenger@ebert-net.eu)**

- Organization / pedagogical conception concerning the years 11-12
- Organization transition 10-11
- Project management school curriculum
- Preparation of the timetables and course schedules of the upper school
- Conception of the upper school profile
- Coordination of the upper school projects and the project trips
- Organization of course offerings and cooperation with neighboring schools
- Preparation, implementation and evaluation of the **Zentralabitur**

Further contact persons and responsibilities can be found in our **organization chart** on the school homepage ([www.ebert-gymnasium.de](http://www.ebert-gymnasium.de)).

### **3. Principles of conflict management**

Wherever people work together intensively, conflicts can arise. This also applies to schools. For this reason, the Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasium has developed a systematic presentation of the individual communication levels for conflict management. This is intended to provide students, parents and guardians as well as teachers with a quick orientation concerning this sensitive topic as to who is or could be the right contact person in the event of a conflict and at what point in time.

Generally, the parties to a conflict should talk to each other as quickly as possible and not about each other. This means that the parties involved first try to resolve the conflict in direct contact with each other and do not immediately take it to the next level of the school hierarchy. This means that in the event of disputes between students or guardians and teachers, the first step is to talk directly. An e-mail via IServ, a telephone call or a direct conversation on a previously agreed date can be the right way to start a discussion. As a general rule, teachers should respond to a message or a request for a conversation as quickly as possible during school hours, but within three working days at the latest. Only if this direct communication does not lead to a solution of the conflict, can and should other persons such as department and school management be involved in the conflict resolution.

Thus, the center of communication between parents and school is always the **personal conversation**. It is important to adhere to certain rules in order to be able to resolve conflicts objectively and constructively. These include confidentiality, active listening, factual messages, mutual understanding and clear procedures for conducting the conversation. Communication succeeds when the following basic rules are observed:

#### **Appreciation**

Students, teachers and parents are taken seriously and valued in their respective work. The other side is accepted and respected in its nature, its individuality and its competence. Each side strives to understand the other and to argue objectively.

#### **Direct communication**

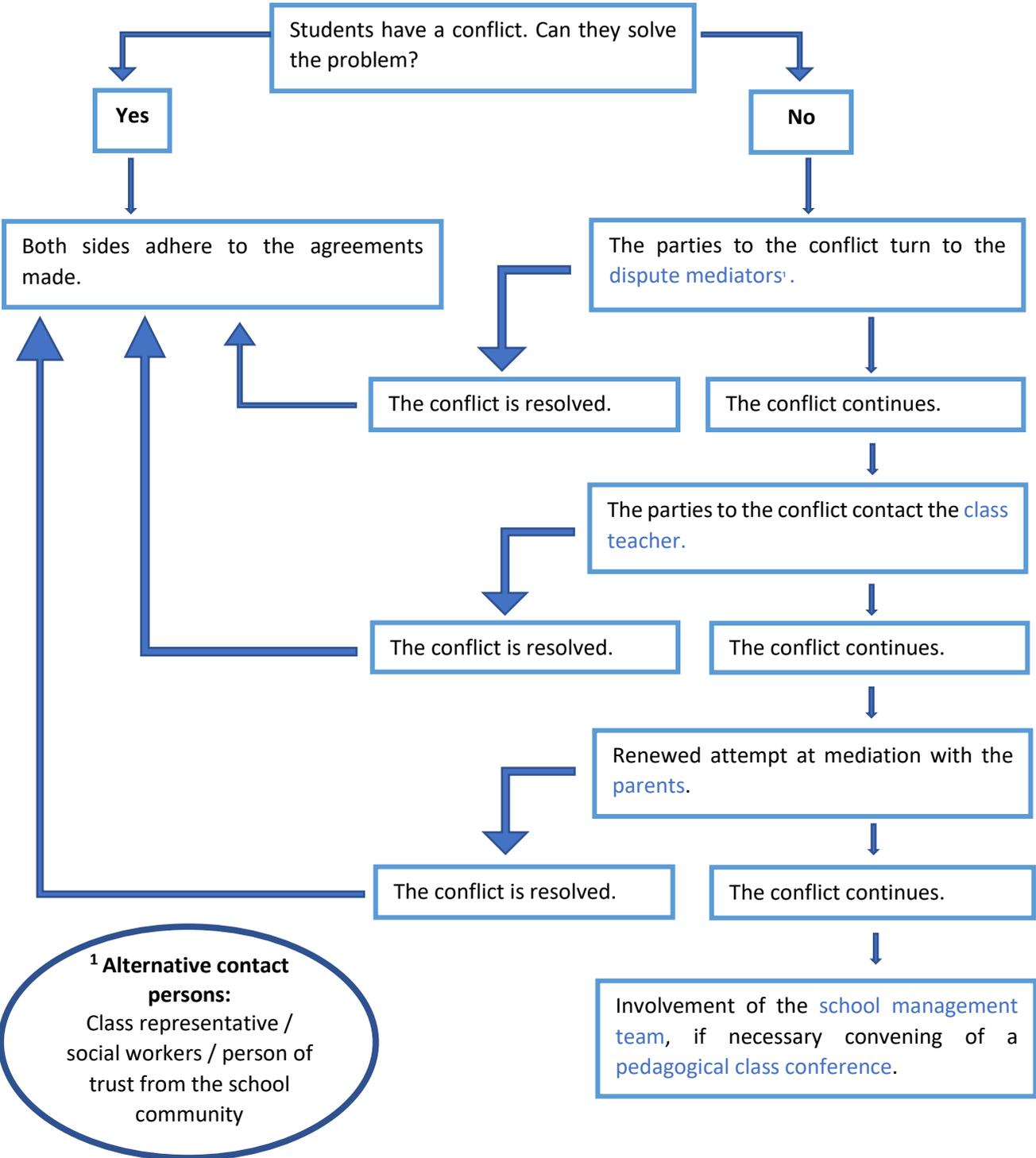
Ambiguities and conflicts are clarified with the persons directly involved. Only if the parties involved do not find a common solution at this level is the discussion circle expanded so that a solution is sought in a personal discussion at the next communication level.

#### **Personal conversation**

The personal conversation is always preferable as a means of communication. In the event of conflict, e-mails should only be used to a limited extent, for example to arrange appointments and describe facts - but not to express criticism, expectations or demands. For daily routines, however, e-mails are very suitable as a fast and reliable means of communication.

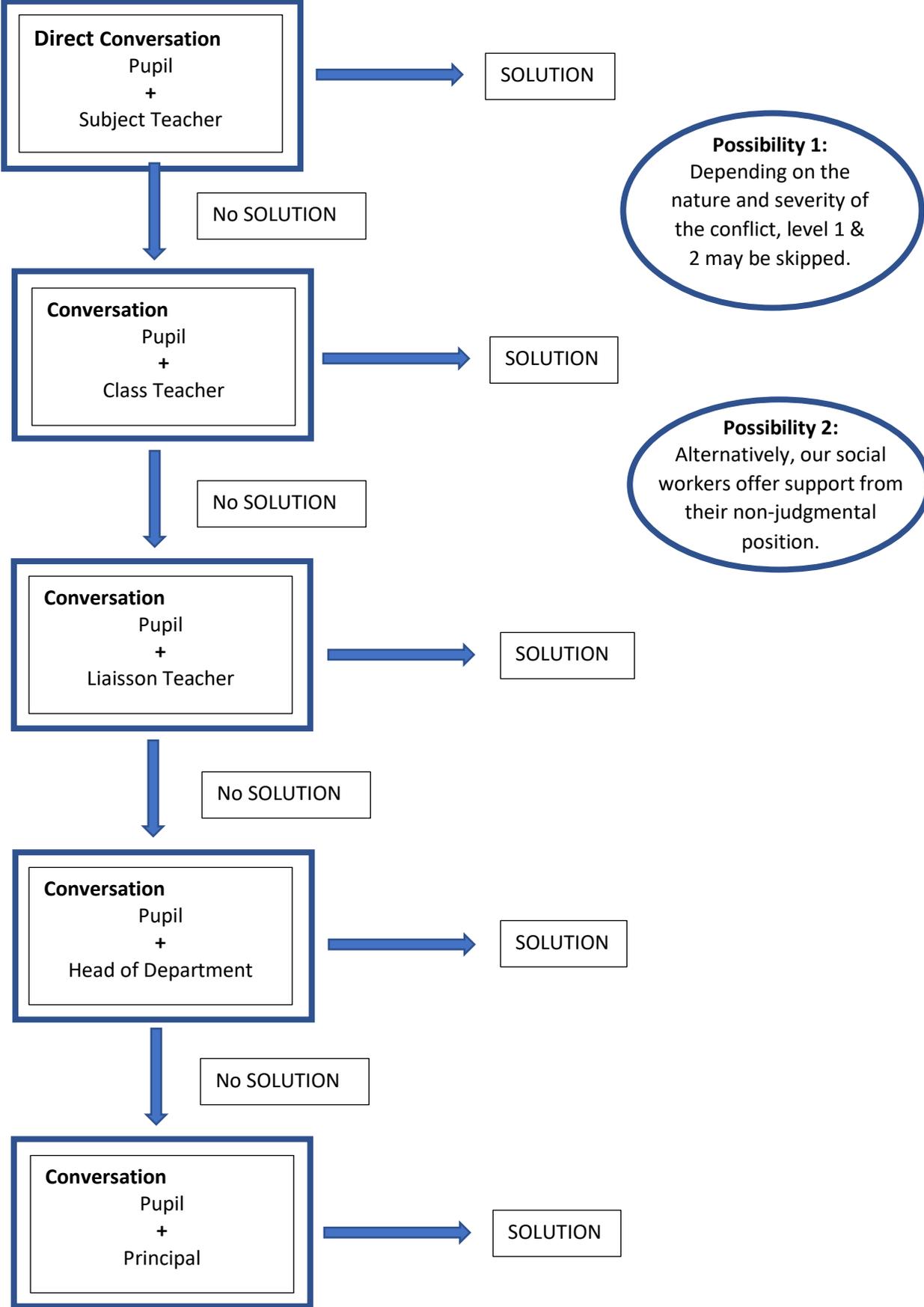
### 3.1 Conflict management between students

School is a social system in which children and young people develop into personalities and acquire a sense of community. As in all areas of life, there are always conflicts at school. In order to promote the constructive handling of conflicts in personal responsibility, dispute resolution or mediation has been firmly established at the Friedrich-Ebert-Gymnasium for several years. Light to medium conflicts can often be solved quickly and easily by our mediators - all of them trained mediators - who help the disputants to find an amicable solution to their problems. Only if this form of mediation is unsuccessful, or if the dispute is too serious for the mediators to deal with, does the adult level deal with the conflict.



### 3.2 Conflict management between students and teachers

We consider the ability to solve problems and conflicts independently to be an important educational goal. Depending on the age of the students, intervention by parents and guardians is often not necessary. We ask parents not to deprive their children of this learning opportunity and to trust in their children's ability to solve problems.



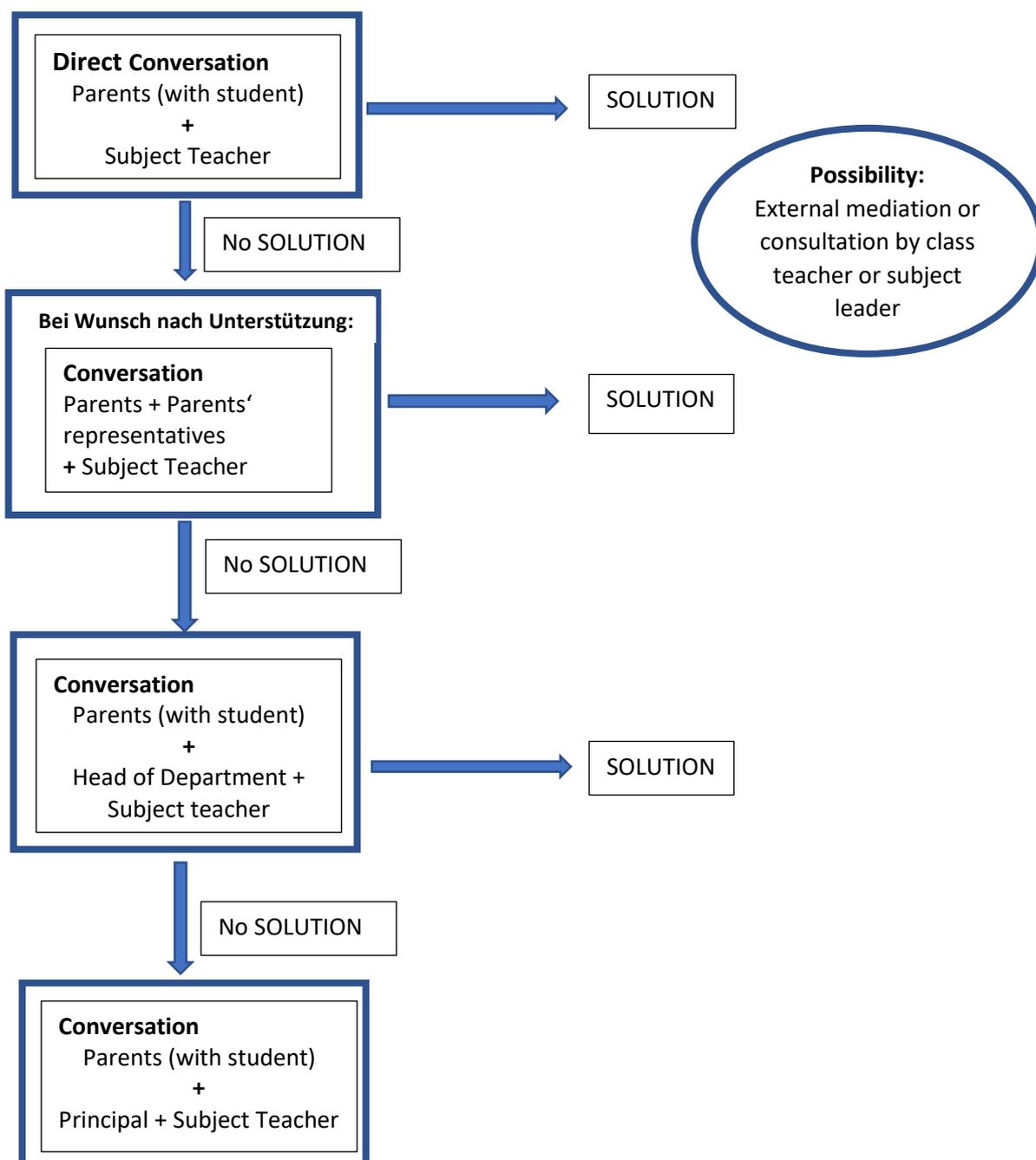
### 3.3 Conflict management between parents and teachers

If parents are critical of a teacher's actions, the teacher can only act if he or she knows about them. For this reason, the teacher should always be contacted first. Parents and teacher make an appointment for a clarifying conversation without time pressure. The appointment is made after a call-back request in the school office.

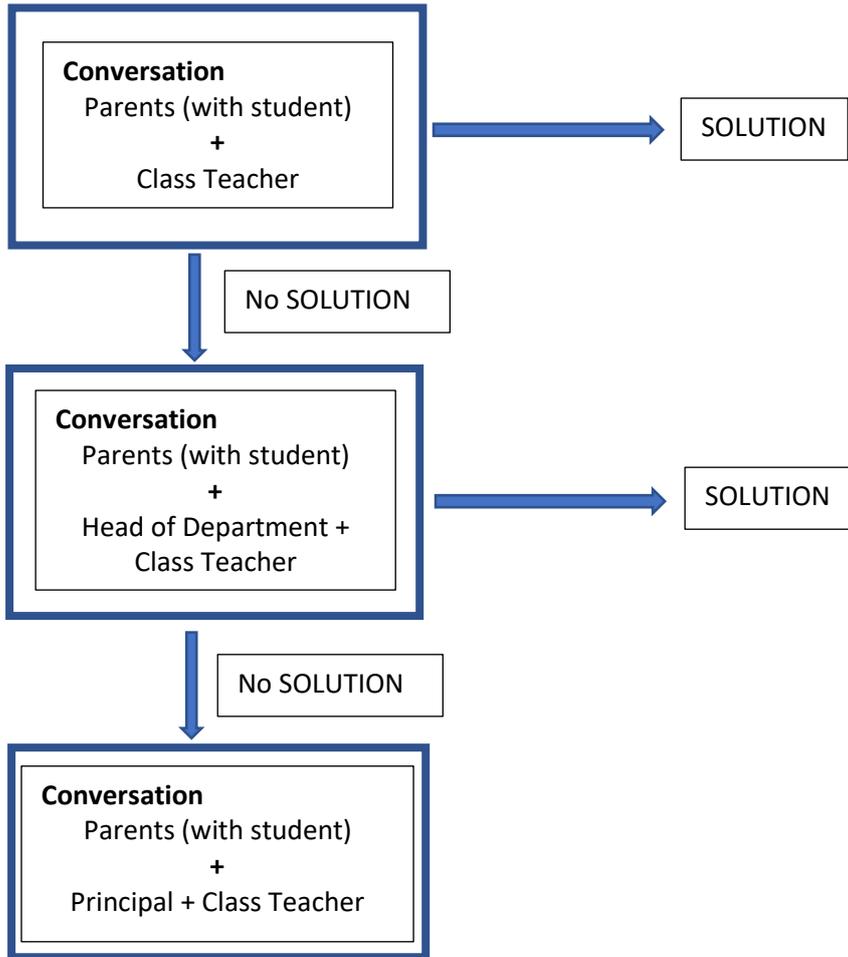
The following concerns are distinguished:

- These are questions about subject teaching (case 1)
- These are general pedagogical questions or questions about the class (case 2)
- These are formal or legal issues (case 3)

#### Case 1: Questions about subject teaching



**Case 2: General pedagogical questions or questions about the class**



**Case 3: Formal or legal issues**

