

**ELIOT INSTITUTE**  
**BOARD RESPONSE TO SPECIAL PROBLEMS (BRSP)**  
**Formerly referred to as SPAS, Amended April 2017**

**RESPONSIBILITY:** The BRSP is used by the Board Representative when a camp issue becomes too large to be solely within the purview of the Dean. In particular, the BRSP should be called upon for major problems which might involve police, lawsuits, liability for Eliot, or endanger the fabric of the community. It should also be used when any ramifications extend beyond the timeframe of one particular camp, especially where continuity of response is required or the issue will need to be discussed by the board. The Board Rep will call upon a team to work through the special problem.

**PURPOSE OF BOARD RESPONSE TO SPECIAL PROBLEMS (BRSP)**

Using a consensus decision-making model, the BRSP Team deals with problems which arise that are not related to running the camp. Usually this relates to incidents in which campers act in ways which jeopardize the community. The BRSP Team meets to problem solve and has the authority to hold participants accountable for their behavior. The problem solving occurs after hearing from all participants. The BRSP Team may or may not determine the consequences of such behavior – which can include requiring a staff member to step down from their position at camp, sending participants home, or not allowing them to come to future conferences.

**BRSP TEAM COMPOSITION** (may include):

- Board Representative
- Deans
- other Board members
- the individual(s) involved
- other appropriate wise people of the camp community whose input and experience seems relevant.

Those with conflicts of interest (e.g. a close relationship with the reporter or accused) should disclose that conflict and offer to recuse themselves from the proceedings.

The camp chaplain should be notified when a BRSP team is called upon, but should not be included on the team so that they can remain neutral and provide support as needed.

**ORDER OF PROCEDURE FOR A BRSP MEETING**

The Board Rep who has been made aware of an issue must make sure the Dean(s) are notified and if there is reason enough for a BRSP meeting, the Board Rep must also inform the other members of the BRSP Team (see above) that they will meet at a specified time and place. It is very important to have the BRSP Team meeting as soon as possible after the violation is reported.

## **BRSP PROCESS**

The process must be conducted with as much love, compassion, and fairness as possible. The group nominates someone to be the facilitator for the discussion.

- The facilitator outlines the process to the rest of the group.
- The facilitator reviews the ground rules for the process: no name-calling, use “I statements,” listen while each person speaks, etc.
- Try to meet in a circle for more effective communication.
- The person reporting the violation has five minutes to explain the infraction as they saw it.
- Witnesses, as necessary, may be permitted to speak.
- Person who allegedly broke the rules has five minutes to explain their behavior.
- Person who allegedly broke the rules has three minutes to ask clarifying type questions of the reporter as necessary.
- Person reporting the violation and other BRSP Team members have five minutes to ask questions of the alleged violator. These questions should be focused on the violation, not on the consequences.
- The BRSP Team members, minus the accused and the reporter, will decide on the appropriate consequences. We strive for a consensus on how to proceed, but the current board members present have the final word.
- If the violator is asked to leave the camp, the Board Rep and Dean will immediately make the arrangements for this to happen.
- During the fact-gathering process, it is important to keep in mind whether any duty arises to report the incident to anyone (e.g., Medical, Fire, Police, Eliot Board, Seabeck Manager, or Insurance Company), and it would be advisable to promptly seek appropriate legal advice with respect to the questions presented, especially if anyone has been injured or if there is any property damage.

Reference document if desired:

<http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/contemplate.pdf>