

Dear Families and Community Members:

New Westminister Schools is dedicated to creating safe, caring, and inclusive environments where all students feel welcomed. We uphold human rights in our schools and are committed to addressing racism, discrimination, and hateful acts. Supporting our students requires dealing with harmful behaviour and holding those who take part in such actions accountable.

Students in district middle or high schools were taught respect, kindness, grace, and inclusion early in their educational journey. We believe in providing learning opportunities through gentle instruction but recognize that significant consequences are necessary for conduct that prevents us from building and maintaining an inclusive and welcome community for all.

We are firmly committed to removing discriminatory, racist, and otherwise hateful actions from our schools. We look forward to working together with you to realize these goals and wish to begin by defining some key elements in preparation for future courageous conversations:

### Racism

Any act, behavior, or practice that discriminates against individuals or groups based on race or ethnicity.

### Discrimination

Unfair or unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, gender identity, age, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

### Hate-based actions

Any actions, speech, or behavior that incite violence, hostility, or discrimination against individuals or groups based on their identity or beliefs.

## District actions against events harmful to school communities

- Racism, discrimination, and hateful actions go against district expectations, the district code of conduct, and school codes of conduct. Such incidents will be dealt with quickly and properly.
- Everyone in school should report incidents of racism, discrimination, or hate. Staff must immediately address and report such conduct to school administration.
- All reported incidents will be investigated.
- The district will support those impacted by racism, discrimination, or hate. This includes providing counseling, academic support, and other resources.
- District responses may include discipline, restorative actions, or both, following district policy, administrative procedures, and best practices.
- The district may provide targeted education and training for students, staff, and the community in responses to racism, discrimination, and hate.

- The district will work with community partners to respond to racism, discrimination, and hate together.

## Examples of racist, discriminatory, and hate-based acts

- Using racial slurs or discriminatory language.
- Spreading racist, homophobic, transphobic jokes or memes.
- Mocking cultural practices or traditional clothing.
- Bullying or physically intimidating students of different backgrounds and lived experiences.
- Vandalizing property with hate symbols or messages.
- Excluding or isolating peers based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, faith, neurodiversity, non-typical family structures, speech patterns, or physical behaviour.
- Sharing or promoting hate speech on social media.
- Refusing to work with or sit next to students of different lived experiences.
- Making assumptions or stereotypes about peers.
- Disrupting cultural or faith-based events.
- Encouraging others to join in discriminatory behavior.
- Displaying symbols of hate or supremacy.
- Mocking peers' names.

New Westminster Schools believes first in creating learning opportunities, early intervention strategies, restorative processes, and conversations in response to incidents. However, where significant or persistent negative conduct occurs, consequences including, but not limited to, the following will occur:

- [A Violence Threat Risk Assessment](#) (VTRA) will be performed on offenders. These assessments are used to determine if the person making threats poses a danger to their intended target(s).
- Suspension (up to five days).
- Review of educational programming, which involves evaluating whether a student should remain at their current school or be placed elsewhere.
- Removal/Expulsion from all district schools (if 16 or older).

In closing, we want to thank our community in advance for helping us make our schools better places for learning by teaching and reinforcing positive and caring conduct in our schools and community, and by supporting us in our efforts to address racism, discrimination, and hate. We look forward to working together to ensure our students receive the safety, education, and care that they deserve.

Sincerely,



Mark Davidson  
Superintendent of Schools