

DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT

Background

The District strives to provide a safe and non-threatening environment in all schools and facilities, and expects that all members of the *District Learning Community* will conduct themselves in a respectful, responsible and considerate manner that:

- Complies with all applicable and relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the prohibited grounds of discrimination as set out in the BC Human Rights Code;
- Reflects the District values of Respect, Integrity and Compassion;
- Supports the Five C's of Social Responsibility: Connection, Caring/Compassion, Character, Confidence, and Competence; and,
- Models the principles of a [Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide](#) published on the [Ministry of Education](#) website.

The District recognizes that within an educational environment, students' feelings of safety and belonging, including freedom from discrimination, can seriously affect their ability to learn. Schools are to be places where students, staff and parents are free from harm, where clear expectations of acceptable behaviour are held and met, and where all members feel they belong.

Definition

District Learning Community: The District Learning Community includes all employees, students, parents, contractors, and volunteers.

Procedures

1. The development and review of Codes of Conduct:
 - 1.1 Each Principal or Supervisor will establish a Code of Conduct consistent with this Administrative Procedure that is designed to encourage and support positive behaviour by all members of the learning community.
 - 1.2 Codes of Conduct will be developed through a consultative process where all members of the learning community (staff, parents, and students) are provided with an opportunity to be involved.
 - 1.3 Codes of Conduct will include the following statement regarding the use of personal digital devices **'The use of personal digital devices at school is to be restricted for educational purposes only, to promote online safety and focused learning environments.'** According to the Ministerial Order M89 the following section is required:

- a) restrictions on the use of personal digital devices at school, including during hours of instruction;
 - b) use of personal digital devices for instructional purposes and digital literacy;
 - c) use of personal digital devices that is appropriate to a student's age and developmental stage;
 - d) accessibility and accommodation needs;
 - e) medical and health needs; and
 - f) equity to support learning outcomes.
- 1.4 A review of the Codes of Conduct will be scheduled annually to ensure they reflect current District and/or school circumstances and emerging issues.
2. Communicating Codes of Conduct:
- 2.1 The District acknowledges that Codes of Conduct can only have a positive impact on the culture of a school when they are communicated to everyone consistently on an annual basis. Everyone within the *District Learning Community* is expected to be aware of their rights and responsibilities, and to exercise them in a positive manner.
- 2.2 With this in mind (2.1) Codes of Conduct will be communicated in the following ways:
- a) Codes of Conduct will be displayed in a prominent location in school facilities where visitors to the school as well as people who are regularly in the school can read them;
 - b) At the beginning of the school year, the District and its schools must ensure that Codes of Conduct are distributed to the *District Learning Community* and also made available to the public (on the District website);
 - c) As new students enroll at District schools during the year, they and their parents will be provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct and provided with an opportunity to discuss expectations with school staff;
 - d) As new employees/contractors are hired and new volunteers become active in school facilities, they will be provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct and given an opportunity to discuss expectations with the District and/or school staff;
 - e) Codes of Conduct will be communicated in the school handbooks provided to all families at the beginning of each school year, and can be reinforced throughout the year by school staff at school events, through school newsletters, and so forth and,
 - f) Wherever possible employees are also to be encouraged to incorporate the active teaching of conduct expectations into regular classroom learning activities.

3. Conduct Expectations:

3.1 The Code of Conduct applies to how the members of the District Learning Community conduct themselves during school and/or District events both on and away from District sites, or when engaging in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment.

3.2 All members of the District Learning Community are to conduct themselves in a manner that:

- a) Respects themselves, others and the school;
- b) Contributes to making schools safe, caring and orderly places;
- c) Contributes, and is sensitive to, the maintenance of a positive school environment;
- d) Brings credit to the school;
- e) Promotes purposeful learning;
- f) Addresses incidents of bullying, harassment and intimidation; and,
- g) Encourages informing “tellable” adult(s) in a timely manner of any incidents breaching the Codes of Conduct.

3.3 Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Behaviours that:
 - Interfere with the learning of others, including their emotional well-being;
 - Interfere with an orderly environment; and,
 - Create unsafe conditions.
- b) Acts, such as:
 - Bullying, harassment or intimidation;
 - Physical violence; and,
 - Retribution against a person who has reported incidents.
- c) Illegal acts, such as:
 - Possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances;
 - Possession or use of weapons; and,
 - Theft of or damage to property.

4. Consequences for Unacceptable Conduct:

4.1 As laid out in *The Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide*, consequences are to be:

- a) Pre-planned, consistent, and fair;
- b) Wherever possible, preventative and restorative, rather than merely punitive; and,
- c) As often as possible, students are to be encouraged to participate in the development of meaningful consequences for violations of the Code of Conduct.

4.2 Rising Expectations:

- a) Conduct expectations for students in the primary grades will be very different than what would be expected of a student in Grade 6 or Grade 11, so the consequences are also to take into account a student's age and maturity.

4.3 Special Needs:

- a) Codes of Conduct cannot discriminate against a student who cannot meet behavioural expectations because of a disability.
- b) Codes of Conduct need to provide special considerations for students with disabilities and wherever possible, behavioural expectations are to be part of their *Individual Education Plan*. Goals and consequences are to take into account the needs of the students.

5. Responsibility to Report:

School officials have a responsibility to advise other parties of serious breaches of the Code of Conduct (e.g., parents, District officials, police and/or other agencies).

6. Protection against Retaliation:

The District will take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a member of the *District Learning Community* who has made a complaint about a breach of a Code of Conduct.

7. BC Human Rights Code:

7.1 Two of the purposes behind the *BC Human Rights Code* are:

- a) To foster a society in British Columbia in which there are no impediments to full and free participation in the economic, social, political and cultural life of British Columbia; and,
- b) To promote a climate of understanding and mutual respect where all are equal in dignity and rights.

7.2 The *BC Human Rights Code* prohibits discrimination based on any of the following 16 grounds:

• Race • Political Belief • Colour • Physical Disability, including HIV and AIDS • Ancestry	• Place of origin • Religion • Sex • Mental Disability • Criminal or Summary Convictions • Marital status	• Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity • Family Status • Age (if you're 19 and above) • Lawful Source of Income (this usually applies to tenancies)	• Retaliation (if someone discriminates against you because you complained to the BC Human Rights Tribunal)
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7.3 For the District, the prohibitions under the *BC Human Rights Code* that are of particular relevance are discriminatory publications and discrimination in services.

- a) Discriminatory publication refers to publishing, issuing or displaying - or causing to be published issued or displayed - any statement, publication, notice, sign, symbol, emblem or other representation that indicates discrimination or an intention to discriminate against a person or a group or class of persons, or is likely to expose a person or group or class of persons to hatred or contempt because of any of the grounds listed above. Schools may need to address discrimination of this type displayed in graffiti, student publications, blogs, websites, or other communication methods. This may be difficult.
- b) Discrimination in service means to deny a person a service customarily available to the public or to discriminate against a person or class of persons regarding a service customarily available to the public.

8. Bullying Behaviour:

8.1 According to the Ministry of Education, bullying is defined as a pattern of repeated aggressive behaviour, with negative intent, directed from one person to another where there is a power imbalance.

8.2 The District believes that even one incident of bullying is serious and will have an effect on the individual(s) involved. Bullying does not need to happen repeatedly for it to be taken seriously. Bullying behaviour is a type of harassment and intimidation.

8.3 This aggressive behaviour includes physical or verbal behaviour and is an intentional and purposeful act meant to inflict injury or discomfort on the other person. There are three critical conditions that distinguish bullying from other forms of aggressive behaviour:

- a) Power: involves a power imbalance. Individuals who bully acquire their power through physical size and strength, including status within the peer group, and/or by recruiting support of the peer group.
- b) Frequency: is repeated over time. Bullying is characterized by frequent and repeated attacks that can create anticipatory terror in the mind of the person being bullied. This fear can be so detrimental it can have long-term debilitating effects.
- c) Intent to harm is intended to hurt. Individuals who bully generally do so with the intent to either physically or emotionally harm the other person.

9. Cyber bullying:

9.1 Bullying behaviour which is carried out online through email, chat rooms, blogs, discussion groups, instant messaging and social media like Facebook. It can also include bullying through cell phone technologies and emerging internet technologies.

- a) See Appendix A Student use of Mobile Devices and Appendix B Restrictions on Cell Phones and Personal Internet-Connected Devices.

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10. The Five C's of Social Responsibility in the District refers to:
Connection, Caring/Compassion, Character, Confidence, and Competence. These assets promote resilience and good character and are therefore developed intentionally in students through curricular and co-curricular activities.
11. Harassment: Any unwelcome or unwanted act or comment that is hurtful, degrading, humiliating, or offensive to another person is an act of harassment. Of particular concern is such behaviour that persists after the aggressor has been asked to stop. Any of the following behaviours could be considered harassment:
- 11.1 Condescending treatment that undermines another's self-respect
 - 11.2 Name-calling, teasing, disrespectful comments
 - 11.3 Gossiping, spreading malicious rumours, "dirty" looks, social ridicule, public embarrassment
 - 11.4 Social isolation ("freezing out" or rejecting others), exclusion from a group, threatening to withdraw friendship
 - 11.5 Repeated unwanted communication
 - 11.6 Unwelcome jokes, innuendoes, insults, or put downs; taunts about a person's body, disability, religion, attire, age, economic status, ethnic or national origin
 - 11.7 Insulting graffiti directed at an individual or group
 - 11.8 Unwanted and uninvited sexual attention, particularly when it is intimidating, hostile, or offensive to the recipient.
12. Intimidation: Intimidation is the act of instilling fear in someone as a means of controlling that person. Some examples of intimidating behaviour include:
- 12.1 Verbal threats i.e., threatening phone calls, threats of violence against a person or property
 - 12.2 Physical threats i.e., showing a weapon, jostling, threatening to punch, stalking or following
 - 12.3 Defacing or stealing victim's property
 - 12.4 Daring or coercing victims to do something dangerous or illegal
 - 12.5 Extortion (demanding payment or goods for a victim's safety)
 - 12.6 Inciting hatred toward a victim
 - 12.7 Setting up a victim to take the blame for an offence
13. District Values: Diversity, Inclusion, Integrity, Accountability, Innovation, Creativity, Curiosity, Engagement, Collaboration, Equity, Respect, Empathy are the common values identified for the District through a community consultation process.
14. Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools:
- 14.1 Safe schools: schools in which members of the school community are free of the fear of harm, including potential threats from inside or outside the school. The attitudes and actions of students, staff and parents support an environment that is resistant to disruption and intrusion and enables a constant focus on student

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achievement.

14.2 Caring schools: schools where it is known that a sense of belonging and connectedness – not just for students, but for everyone in the school community – is a necessary element in the creation and maintenance of a safe learning environment. Caring schools are ones in which members of the school community feel a sense of belonging and have opportunities to relate to one another in positive, supportive ways. All aspects of school life embrace and reflect diversity. The school is an inviting place for students, staff, parents and visitors. Staff members make conscious and concerted efforts to help other members of the school community feel connected.

14.3 Orderly schools: schools that are free from chaos and confusion, and alive with the sights and sounds of purposeful learning activities. Routines for repetitious activities are well-established, so students' minds and bodies are free to focus on the learning and development work at hand.

a) A businesslike atmosphere exists, yet there is creativity and fun in abundance. Everyone in the school has work to do and does it in a timely way – and in a way that doesn't interfere with the learning and development of others. Everyone feels a sense of meaningful accomplishment, and feels the school is a good place to be. All members of the school community are informed about and exercise their rights and responsibilities as school citizens.

14.4 "Tellable adult(s)": all school staff members are considered to be adults that students may tell if there has been a breach to the school code of conduct. Parents and other trusted adults in a student's life are also important "tellable adults".

*Reference: Section 6, 7, 7.1, 8, 8.4, 17, 18, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act School Regulation 265/89
Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide*

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