

September 2012

As Superintendent of the Abbotsford School District, I sincerely hope that you have a successful year. I am confident that all Abbotsford schools provide a safe and caring environment. The Board of Education has requested that all students do their part to ensure that their friends are safe as well. As a result we have included the Code of Conduct, the 'Fair Notice Letter' and District Policies on Harassment (bullying), Search and Seizure, and Emergency Closure of Schools for your information.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

#### 1. Purpose:

The Board of Education has a responsibility to establish expectations of student conduct in schools as part of its governance role for the District. The Board believes that the responsibility for student behaviour and conduct in schools is shared among students, staff and parents in order to create a safe, caring and orderly learning environment. To support these aims, the Board has established a District Code of Conduct for Students that shall be followed in all schools.

#### 2. Responsibilities:

School staff are responsible for consistently supporting and applying the District's and School's Codes of Conduct and establishing a positive climate in which structure, support and encouragement assist students in developing a sense of self-discipline and responsibility. School staff is required to inform volunteers and the school community about the Code of Conduct and its expectations.

Students are responsible for respecting the rights and dignity of others in learning environments free from discrimination as set out in the BC Human Rights Code and becoming actively and productively involved in their own academic learning and social growth.

Parents/Guardians and all other adults working with students are responsible for knowing and supporting the District's and School's Codes of Conduct, and encouraging students to understand and follow these Codes of Conduct.

#### 3. Conduct Expectations:

The Board believes that acceptable behaviours and conduct are fostered in a positive climate in which:

- All students feel safe, valued and trusted, and have the opportunity to develop, assume and maintain responsibility and self-motivation;
- All students feel supported without fear of retaliation in reporting unsafe conditions, actions or potential incidents;
- There is a joint effort to learn and a feeling of mutual respect among staff, students and parents;
- Appropriate behaviour is taught, encouraged, modeled, practiced, and acknowledged, thereby increasing student self-respect and positive social behaviours;
- Disciplinary action, wherever possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than solely punitive;
- Expectations for student behaviour increase as they become older and more mature;
- Disciplinary action is considerate of students with special needs if these students are unable to fully comply with the Code of Conduct due to a diagnosed disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature.

Superintendent's Office

The Board believes that acceptable student conduct, based on respect for oneself, respect for others, and respect for property is essential to the development of responsible citizens. To this end students are expected to:

- Be aware of and obey all school rules;
- Respect the rights of all persons within the school including peers, staff, parents and volunteers;
- Refrain from lying, cheating, stealing;
- Attend classes punctually and regularly;
- Work cooperatively and diligently at their studies and home assignments;
- Respect the legitimate authority of the school staff;
- Respect all school property, including buildings and equipment;
- Respect the diversity of our school community;
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner at all times;
- Refrain from any behaviour that would threaten, harass, bully (bullying includes but is not limited to, physical or verbal intimidation, verbal harassment and cyber bullying), intimidate, assault or discriminate against, in any way, any person within the school community on or off school property;
- Refrain from being in possession of, or under the influence of, drugs and/or alcohol in all school facilities or on school grounds or at school sponsored functions and activities;
- Refrain from being in possession of weapons of any kind in school or at school activities;
- Refrain from inappropriate computer usage and/or multi-media devices in accordance with Board policies (cell phones, camera, iPhones, Blackberries, etc.).

The Board believes that any breach of Code of Conduct behaviours or expectations would be considered unacceptable. Students are encouraged to inform a responsible adult when becoming aware of any infraction of the Code of Conduct.

**4. Notification:**

The Superintendent will ensure that each Principal, in consultation with staff, parents and, when appropriate, students, establishes a Code of Conduct for his/her school that is consistent with the District Student Code of Conduct and which reflects the provincial standards.

The school's Code of Conduct and a summary of the District's policies on Suspension, Re-admittance and Refusal to Continue to Offer an Educational Program (11.120), Possession of Weapons and Explosives (11.90), Drugs (11.100), Search and Seizure (11.110) and Cell Phones and Multimedia Devices (9.330) shall be communicated to all students annually.

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Protection Act* and/or other relevant legislation, it may be necessary to advise other parties of serious breaches of the District Student Code of Conduct.

**5. Consequences:**

Students will be disciplined in a timely and fair manner and such discipline shall be in accordance with District Policy 11.120, 'Suspension, Re-admittance and Refusal to Continue to Offer an Educational Program.'

Students, while attending school, school sponsored functions and activities, shall be subject to the District Code of Conduct as well as the school's Code of Conduct. Students may be subject to discipline under the school and/or District Code of Conduct for any conduct which has the effect of negatively impacting the school environment, whether that conduct occurs on or off School District property, at a school sponsored function or activity, or elsewhere.

Serious breaches of conduct that threaten the safety and welfare of others will be referred directly to a District Board of Review (Level Three suspension).

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The condensed version of the District Code of Conduct is posted in every school.

**References**

Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide  
School Act  
BC Human Rights Code  
Canadian Charter of Rights  
Constitution Act

Multiculturalism Act  
Official Languages Act  
Youth Criminal Justice Act  
School District Policy 11.120

**HARASSMENT – STUDENTS AND STAFF (Policy 9.240)**

The Board of Education is committed to fostering an environment within which all individuals are treated with respect and are free from harassment. Harassment or bullying is against the District Code of Conduct and will be dealt with severely and quickly.

Definition

Harassment or bullying includes inappropriate remarks, jokes, taunting, comments, gestures, sexually suggestive comments or actions that create an uncomfortable or hostile environment.

A bully is someone who:

- Uses power to hurt others or harm their possessions
- Purposely scares or intimidates others
- Often hurts the same person repeatedly
- Is sometimes supported by other people who just watch and laugh, instead of helping the person being bullied.

Complaint Procedures

If you are being bullied or harassed you should take the following steps to try and stop the harassment or prevent it from happening again. You deserve to be safe at school.

1. Report all incidents to a person of authority at your school, your parent, or an adult you trust. It is important to tell your parents of any incidents of bullying or harassment that may occur at school, at school functions or on your way to and from school.
2. If the bully or harasser is an adult from within your school, then it is important to report this immediately to your parents/guardians or an adult you trust outside of school. You and the adult you have told should contact either the principal or the Superintendent of Schools.

It is important to report all incidents of bullying or harassment; however, false allegations are a serious matter and can damage a person's reputation so are not acceptable in any way.

If you require further information, please contact the School Board Office at 604-859-4891.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE (Policy 11.110)**

All students have a right to attend school in an environment conducive to learning. Since alcohol and other drug possession, supply or sale is illegal and interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of all individuals, the School District is committed to preventing drug use and to maintaining a drug-free education environment. Students are not required to obtain a school locker, but if they choose to do so, they do so on the condition that it is to be used only for authorized purposes. Lockers may be subjected to searches by School District No. 34 staff, and the School District may use trained dogs to sweep the locker areas for drugs.

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## EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS

During emergency situations schools will be closed to ensure the greatest possible level of safety for students and staff. Reasons for such closures could include: bomb threats, gas leaks, fire, smoke, power failure, extreme weather situations, earthquakes and other causes that may endanger students and staff. The Superintendent is responsible for all decisions relating to school closures.

In the event that inclement weather requires a school closure prior to the school day starting, the District will advise the following media outlets as early as possible before 6:00 a.m. of the details of the closure:

CBC Radio	690 AM Radio	STAR FM	98.3 FM Radio
CKNW	980 AM Radio	Country 107	107.1 FM Radio
News 1130	1130 AM Radio		

The information will also be available on the voicemail systems at the School Board Office (604-859-4891) and on the School District website at [www.sd34.bc.ca](http://www.sd34.bc.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Godden", with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Kevin Godden, Superintendent