

AP 344 – Code of Conduct

Purpose

The Board of Education of Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment in its schools.

To ensure a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment, the Board recognizes its responsibility to collaboratively establish expectations regarding conduct, and for communicating such expectations to staff, students and parents on a regular basis.

The expectations outlined in this administrative procedure represent the Code of Conduct and provide the basis for school codes of conduct and are based upon the guidelines provided in the BC Ministry of Education's 'Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide (2008)'.

Students and staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment at all schools, school functions and activities.

Appropriate student conduct is based on respect for oneself and others and is essential to the development of responsible citizens.

Any conduct that adversely affects the safe, caring and inclusive environment of schools is a breach of the Code of Conduct and warrants appropriate intervention.

Procedure

1.0 Board of Education Expectations for Staff

The Board of Education believes that the ongoing, dedicated work of school and district staff, in cooperation with parents and the community, has the effect of encouraging positive behaviour and reducing student misconduct. To these ends, the Board expects that staff will:

- respect the position of trust and influence that exists between employees and students in the school environment by establishing and maintaining the boundaries of an appropriate and professional relationship;
- model respectful, caring and inclusive interaction with students and adults;
- not engage in any sexually related behaviour with a student with or without consent;

- demonstrate respect for diversity including but not limited to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, religion, culture or socio-economic status as referenced in the Board's *Inclusion Policy* and the *BC Human Rights Code*; prohibit any publication or statement that discriminates against a person or group on the basis of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, religion, culture or socio-economic status as per section 7 (*Discriminatory publication*) of the Human Rights Code, RSBC 1996, c. 210; ensure that no person or group of persons are denied accommodation or access to services or facilities within the school district on the basis of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, religion, culture or socio-economic status as per section 8 (*Discrimination in accommodation, service and facility*) of the Human Rights Code, RSBC 1996, c. 210;
- present relevant, engaging and inclusive educational programs in which all student see themselves represented to the greatest extent possible;
- develop a school-specific Code of Conduct that reflects the district's Code of Conduct and adheres to the Ministerial guidelines for the development of a school Code of Conduct ('Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide (2008)');
- clearly communicate expectations for student performance in learning activities and for student conduct;
- directly involve students, as appropriate for their age level, in meaningful decision-making regarding their learning, including matters related to school climate, culture and student conduct;
- communicate effectively with other staff, parents and students regarding breaches of conduct; such communications may include discussions with community and/or social agencies as necessary; and,
- take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint about a breach of a code of conduct.
- respect the confidentiality of student information and respect the privacy of students and families unless disclosure is required by law;
- not abuse or exploit students or minors for personal, sexual, material, ideological or other advantages; and
- All responses to a student's breach of the school's Code of Conduct shall be educative, preventative and restorative in nature.

Complaints about staff conduct or their decisions will be handled in accordance with *AP 424 – Addressing Parent Complaints* or *AP 325 - Appeals*.

2.0 Guidelines for School Code of Conduct

- 2.1 Each school principal, in collaboration with staff, parents and students as appropriate, shall establish a school Code of Conduct reflecting the standards outlined in this *AP 344 - Code of Conduct* as well as in the BC Ministry of Education's Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools, 2008 (<https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/guide/scoguide.pdf>).
- 2.2 The school code of conduct will be prominent on school web sites, available to the public and will be on display in prominent areas of the school.
- 2.3 The school code of conduct will be distributed to all staff, students and parents at the beginning of each school year, will be provided to new staff, students and parents who transfer into the school during the year, and will be reviewed with representatives of staff, students and parents on an annual basis.
- 2.4 The school code of conduct will apply to students while at school, while going to and from school and while attending any school curricular or extracurricular function or activity at any location and at whatever time of day the function or activity may occur. It also includes activity beyond the school day/week, and includes online behaviour that could impact the safe, caring and inclusive environment of the school or impact the safety and security of individual students.
- 2.5 The school code of conduct is intended to promote and maintain a safe, caring and inclusive environment by providing guidelines for acceptable student conduct. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of personal responsibility and self-discipline appropriate to their age level. To this end students are expected to:
 - demonstrate commitment to learning by attending classes punctually and regularly, and by working diligently on school learning activities and home assignments;
 - practice academic honesty and personal integrity by not participating in lying, plagiarism or cheating;
 - dress in a manner which reflects purpose and decorum, in compliance with the school dress code, and cultural propriety;
 - respect the rights, dignity and diversity of others, such diversity including but not limited to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, religion, culture or socio-economic status;
 - refrain from any acts of discrimination in accordance with the *BC Human Rights Code*;
 - respect all property belonging to others including that belonging to the school or the district, and refrain from any acts of theft, vandalism or graffiti;
 - conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner when going to and from school, in classes, in schools, on school grounds, on school buses, on field trips and during extra-curricular activities;

- use respectful language and refrain from using obscenity or profanity while at school, at school events or on school property;
- neither participate in nor condone, provoke, encourage or make a spectacle of any form of violence (*AP 311 - Swarming*);
- seek to prevent violence and potentially violent situations by reporting to adults all incidents and concerns regarding student safety;
- refrain from any behaviour that would physically or verbally harass, intimidate, bully or threaten in any way any person within the school community on or off school property (*AP 312 - Student Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying*);
- refrain from being in possession of or using weapons of any kind while at school, at school events or on school property;
- refrain from possession, use or trafficking any illegal or restricted drugs, alcohol or substances while at school, at school events or on school property (*AP 346 - Substance Abuse*);
- refrain from inappropriate use of computers, cellular phones, cameras, social media and/or other communication technologies.

- 2.6 Students shall not engage in any form of retaliation against an individual who makes a complaint or provides information regarding violations of the student code of conduct.

3.0 Appropriate Intervention

- 3.1 The Board of Education directs that incidents of student misconduct will result in appropriate intervention by school or district staff and have in all cases an educative, preventive and/or restorative focus and purpose.
- 3.2 Intervention is to be appropriate to the age and circumstances of the student and the nature of the misconduct. Routine and regular intervention is an integral part of the educational program offered by teachers at the classroom level. More serious and/or repeated misconduct may result in intervention at the level of the school administration. Serious or repeated misconduct may require intervention at the district level including referral to the appropriate assistant superintendent.
- 3.3 Appropriate intervention that is educative, preventive and/or restorative in focus and purpose, and which seeks to be consistent and equitable may in some cases vary from student to student where the misconduct appears to be similar. Intervention may vary according to the needs of the student, the needs of the school or situation and the nature of previous interventions.
- 3.4 Students with identifiable special needs might be unable to comply with a code of conduct due to having a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature. Such students may require special consideration in the selection of appropriate forms of intervention to ensure that they are not subject to disciplinary or intervention measures as a direct or indirect consequence of having a special need.

- 3.5 Serious and/or repeated misconduct may result in suspension or expulsion from a regular school program in accordance with the *School Act*. Other than for serious offences, as outlined in *AP 345 – Student Suspension*, suspension shall be considered when the school's progressive interventions have failed to correct inappropriate behaviour, or at the culmination of a series of incremental disciplinary consequences.
- 3.6 The assistant superintendent must be consulted with and authorize suspensions of five (5) to twenty (20) days.
- 3.7 The Board of Education must deliberate on and authorize extended suspensions of longer than twenty days or expulsions. (Reference: *School Act*, Section 26/85 (2) (c) and *AP 345 - Student Suspension*, *AP 346 - Substance Abuse*, and *AP 311 - Swarming*).
- 3.8 In the case of any suspension of a student the Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide an educational program for the student.
- 3.9 In the case of expulsion of a student the Board of Education may refuse to offer an educational program to a student 16 years of age or older in accordance with the *School Act*.

4.0 Board/District Responsibility for Notification

Consistent with its belief that promotion of positive student behaviour and intervention in cases of student misconduct are responsibilities which the district shares with parents and the community, the Board of Education recognizes that schools and the district have a responsibility to advise other parties of serious breaches of the district's Code of Conduct.

- 4.1 The Board of Education expects that parents will be involved, to the greatest extent practicable by school and district staff, in assisting with the management of student conduct.
- 4.2 Parents of students involved in serious misconduct will be notified in all cases.
- 4.3 Parents of students who are directly affected by the serious misconduct of others will be notified in all cases.
- 4.4 District administration, the Board of Education, the RCMP and other agencies will be notified as appropriate, and as required by administrative procedure or through the district's Violence, Threat/Risk Assessment (VTRA).

5.0 Record Keeping

The Board expects that school and district administration will maintain accurate and reliable records that allow the monitoring and tracking of individual, school and district-wide patterns of student conduct.

6.0 Appeal Process

Pursuant to Section 11 of the *School Act* and *AP 325 – Appeals*, a student or the parent of a student entitled to an educational program in the district may appeal any decision of an employee of the Board which significantly affects the education, health or safety of the student.

Adopted: August 21, 1976

Amended: January 16, 1985; June 13, 1990; November 10, 1993; November 11, 1997; February 28, 2007; July 8, 2009; April 19, 2016

References: *Diversity in BC Schools 2004*

BC Human Rights Code

BC Ministry of Education's 'Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide (2008)'

AP 424 – Addressing Parent Complaints

AP 346 - Substance Abuse

AP 311 - Swarming

AP 312 – Student Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

AP 325 – Appeals

AP 342 – Fair Notice (VTRA Protocol)