

Section Two: Codes of Conduct

School boards and schools are entrusted through the *School Act* with authority to establish codes of conduct. While recognizing the autonomy of these bodies and acknowledging the efforts they have already undertaken to ensure school climates are as positive as possible, the provincial standards described below are provided to assist them in developing consistent and coherent policies and practices in their communities. Although most schools have codes of conduct in place, it is expected that all British Columbia schools will revisit existing codes and/or develop new codes of conduct reflecting the provincial standards.

See – Appendix E:
Guiding Legislation

School Act Section 85 (2) (c): ... a board may, subject to this Act and the regulations, do all or any of the following:

- (c) make rules
 - (i) establishing a code of conduct for students attending educational programs operated by or on behalf of the board.

Standards

1. All British Columbia schools include students, parents and staff in the development and review of codes of conduct.
2. Expectations regarding acceptable conduct are made known to all students, parents and school staff, as well as to temporary staff or visitors. Protocols while acting as ambassadors of the school also are made known to students, parents, coaches and involved members of the greater community.
3. Behavioural expectations outlined in codes of conduct are consistently taught and actively promoted. Responses to unacceptable behaviour are based consistently on sound principles and are appropriate to the context.
4. Conduct is continuously monitored to ensure codes reflect current and emerging situations and are contributing to school safety.
5. Codes of conduct are reviewed and improved in light of evidence gathered and/or relevant research, and are revisited as part of a regular cycle of policy review.
6. Codes of conduct are compatible between schools in the community and across elementary, middle and secondary levels.

Standards

7. At a minimum, codes of conduct contain the following elements:

a. **Statement of Purpose** – one or more statements that provide a rationale for the code of conduct and explain its goals. For example:

- to establish and maintain safe, caring and orderly environments for purposeful learning
- to establish and maintain appropriate balances among individual and collective rights, freedoms and responsibilities
- to clarify and publish expectations for student behaviour while at school, while going to and from school, and while attending any school function or activity at any location

b. **Conduct Expectations**

Acceptable conduct – one or more statements that convey clearly and concisely how students are expected to conduct themselves at school, while going to and from school, and while attending any school function at any location. For example:

- respecting self, others and the school
- helping to make the school a safe, caring and orderly place
- informing a “tellable” adult, in a timely manner (in advance, if possible) of incidents of bullying, harassment or intimidation
- engaging in purposeful learning activities in a timely manner
- acting in a manner that brings credit to the school

Unacceptable conduct – one or more statements that convey clearly and concisely what is considered to be unacceptable conduct. At least one statement should be included to explain that the behaviours cited are examples only and not an all-inclusive list. For example:

- behaviours that:
 - interfere with the learning of others
 - interfere with an orderly environment
 - create unsafe conditions
- acts of:
 - bullying, harassment or intimidation
 - physical violence
 - retribution against a person who has reported incidents
- illegal acts, such as:
 - possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances
 - possession or use of weapons
 - theft of or damage to property

Rising expectations – one or more statements that outline a progression of expectations held for students as they become older, more mature and move through successive grades. For example:

- increasing personal responsibility and self-discipline
- increasing consequences for inappropriate behaviour

Standards

- c. **Consequences** – one or more statements to explain that the severity and frequency of unacceptable conduct as well as the age and maturity of students is considered in determining appropriate disciplinary action. For example:
- responses to unacceptable conduct are pre-planned, consistent and fair
 - disciplinary action, wherever possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than merely punitive
 - students, as often as possible, are encouraged to participate in the development of meaningful consequences for violations of the established code of conduct
- d. **Notification** – one or more statements to explain that school officials may have a responsibility to advise other parties of serious breaches of the code of conduct. For example:
- parents of student offender(s) – in every instance
 - parents of student victim(s) – in every instance
 - school district officials – as required by school district policy
 - police and/or other agencies – as required by law
 - all parents – when deemed to be important to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate action to address it