

**BIRCHLAND ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
CODE OF CONDUCT
2008-09**

School Mission:

“Working together with our school community, our mission at Birchland is to ensure a safe, supportive and respectful environment which promotes the development of individual potential and enthusiasm for life-long learning.”

“Birchland Elementary” Code of Conduct

1) Introduction

**School boards and schools are entrusted through the School Act with the authority to establish codes of conduct. Recognizing the autonomy of these bodies and acknowledging the effort 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 the existing codes and/or develop new codes of conduct reflecting the provincial standards.
(Safe, Caring and Orderly Guide, page 15)**

2) CODE OF CONDUCT : Key Elements

Process – “All British Columbia schools include students, parents and staff in the development and review of codes of conduct.”

February 2005– May 2006:

The need to develop a school code of conduct as per the Ministry Guidelines was discussed with staff. Members of BPAC and the SPC were informed about the creation of the code and the process which would be followed.

A Social Responsibility Committee conducted three meetings in order to complete a draft copy of the code. The draft version was presented to staff, BPAC and SPC and, with the exception of minor alterations, was accepted and endorsed by all.

The Code was included in the planners for the 05-06 school year. A student recognition program began that centered on the behavioural expectations outlined in the code.

Sept. 06 - Sept. 07:

Code of Conduct was reviewed and sustained at the start of both the 06-07 and 07-08 school years.

September 2008:

Communication: The existing Code of Conduct is in the student planners for the 2008-09 school year. It was announced to the BPAC at the September meeting that we are beginning the process of revisiting the existing Code. Family newsletters will be used to update each step of the upcoming process.

Implementation:

Staff participated in a Professional Development session that explored a need and desire to revisit the Code and begin a new process. A key element of the new process would be to align the document with meaningful teaching content and a common language that would permeate our school and community. It was agreed that the current system of recognition assemblies was no longer satisfying its original intention.

Two assemblies have been set for October 2008 which will introduce the first steps of the process. The assemblies will be followed by break-out sessions that will facilitate the gathering of input from students and parents in attendance. Feedback forms will be sent home to gather input from parents who are unable to attend.

Input from students was solicited at each step of the process. The feedback from each step was used as the foundation for the step that followed. The final stage was a categorized list of statements that described our agreed “way of being” at Birchland School. Once the process was completed, each class reviewed the final document with their teacher and then were part of a ceremonial signing of the front display board. The board displays all steps of the process, as well as “Our Agreement” (the final summary of how we agree to treat one another in Birchland Elementary School). Staff, parents and visitors are all encouraged to sign the board after reviewing it upon arrival to our school. The contents of the front display board continued to serve as a place of reference and learning throughout the course of the year. The agreement is also posted in classrooms and other areas of the school.

Alignment:

As mentioned, we find it imperative to align our Code with common teaching in the classroom regarding the expectations within the code. We will begin with Professional Development opportunities with staff members who will guide us through the process of establishing what this content will include. We are beginning to explore elements of Choice Theory, Peer Mediation and Social Emotional Learning research. It is our intent that students are given opportunity to develop understandings and strategies which will serve to assist them in becoming increasingly competent at choosing positive, pro-social behaviours.

Monitoring and Reviewing:

The process involved a review at each stage of development. This happened through SPC meetings, staff meetings and feedback forms. We will watch for evidence of the intended student learning to be actualized in our building and on our playground. We will use a system for conflict resolution that will be based on our common learning and language. Student ability to participate effectively at this stage will exhibit internalized learning. We will also gather data in alignment with our school goal of increasing Social Responsibility. School-wide data using the Performance Standards (for Social Responsibility) will be collected at the end of the first and second terms.

Communication:

The revision of the Code of Conduct has been a process that has spanned the duration of the first and second terms of the year. Students, staff and parents were all invited to attend the series of assemblies and classroom activities that worked through the process. Updates on the process and the Code were communicated through newsletters, assemblies, SPC meetings, PAC meetings and a display board in the school foyer that was constantly revised as the process unfolded. The final document was sent home to all families, posted in rooms throughout the school and illustrated on a large scroll in the front foyer. It will be included in our student handbooks and staffing packages for the upcoming school year and continue to be posted on our public website.

New staff members, TOC's, lunch room supervisors and visitors are all invited to review the code and to sign their names on the display board to

indicate their understanding and their agreement with its statements. The framework of progressive discipline is discussed and supported. Lunchtime expectations are clearly communicated and consistently enforced. It is explained to parents that there is an elevated expectation for students to behave in a safe and appropriate way during the noon hour. Phone calls and formal letters are methods of informing parents that their child's behaviour has been reported as a concern. Repeated reports may result in the student being disinvented from the lunch program for a set period of time.

Standards:

Statement of Purpose:

“Birchland Elementary School promotes the values expressed in the BC Human Rights Code respecting the rights of all individuals in accordance with the law – prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation – in respect of discriminatory publication and discrimination in accommodation, service and facility in the school environment.”

Conduct Expectations:

Acceptable Conduct:

This refers to the following behaviours by students:

- Do their best
- Take responsibility for their choices
- Play in a safe manner and follow playground rules
- Show respect for self, others and the environment
- Respect the personal space of others
- Use appropriate and safe language
- Take care of our school and its property

Unacceptable Conduct:

School personnel will treat seriously any behaviour or communication that discriminates based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital

status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation (prohibited grounds set out in the BC Human Rights Code)

We will treat seriously all behaviour that has a negative impact on self or others. Such behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- **Bullying or harassment (physical, verbal, relational, cyber) – occurring on or off school grounds**
- **Physical threats or intimidation**
- **Theft or damage to property**
- **Possession or use of weapons**
- **Possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances**

Consequences:

When inappropriate behaviour occurs, the following guidelines govern the use of consequences:

- **Take into consideration the age of the child, the frequency of the behaviour and the nature of the behaviour**
- **Consequences are as immediate, relevant and meaningful as possible.**
- **When appropriate, student helps to identify the natural consequences associated with his/her actions. When applicable, opportunity is given to restore relationships between the individuals involved.**
- **Chronic or serious behaviour may involve parents and school-based team members in the development of a behavioural action plan to support student in making more successful choices.**
- **Expectations will rise as students mature. Consequences for unacceptable behaviour will take into account the student's age, maturity and special needs, if any.**
- **Special considerations may apply to students with special needs if these students are unable to comply with the code of conduct due to having a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature.**
- **All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of the code of conduct by another person. The greatest of these steps is the creation of a culture that communicates an expectation of reporting as a responsible act of citizenship ultimately benefitting all involved.**

Parent Involvement:

Ongoing communication between home and school will be facilitated through the student planners and/or an alternate system as agreed upon by the classroom teachers and parents.

When inappropriate behaviour is of a serious or repetitive nature, parents will be notified and will be expected to be involved in planning interventions to support the modification of the concerning behaviour. Depending on the situation, this intervention may include the use of school suspension.