



BIRCHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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(District #43 - Coquitlam)

Student Handbook 2011 - 2012

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PRINCIPAL

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www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/birchland

This planner belongs to:

Mission Statement

"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."

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School Goal 2011-2012

At Birchland we have one major goal for this school year. This goal was chosen as a result of data collected throughout the 2010 – 2011 school year.

GOAL: To increase students' writing ability

Code of Conduct

"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, colour, 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."

Please see our Code of Conduct in its entirety at: www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/birchland

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

HOW TO USE THIS AGENDA

Students can make good use of their Agendas by:

- *Having them on their desk or table at school everyday*
- *Being responsible for – recording their homework, recording their long and short range goals, recording “coming events” reminders*
- *Taking their Agenda home daily to use at home and to show parents*

Parents can help by:

- *Reviewing the Agenda with your child (there are other useful parts of the book (timetables, calendars, math and spelling information, tips, etc.)*
- *Looking at the daily entries and initialing the Agenda*
- *Writing a comment to the teacher if needed*

At school, teachers will assist by:

- *Reviewing the Agenda with the class*
- *Checking the Agenda regularly*
- *Talking to students about goal setting*
- *Allowing a few minutes at the end of the day for students to complete their Agenda*

Newsletters/Communication

Open two-way communication between home and school is of the utmost importance in order to best meet the needs of our students and to provide support throughout the year.

Bulletins, letters and newsletters outlining activities and special events will be sent home on an as-needed basis. Important newsletters and notices will also be posted on our school portal at: www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/birchland

The Birchland portal will also contain a Calendar of Events to keep you informed of upcoming events and activities. Please be sure to check the portal often to stay informed.

Teachers will contact parents/guardians when they have good news or when they have a concern and we encourage parents to contact us in a similar manner.

We have an open door policy and parents should feel welcome in our school at all times.

Photos, Video, and the Internet

Please note that parents frequently take photos and video footage throughout the year at special events. We expect that this would be done for the purpose of creating memories for the family. Group photos or video should not be shared on public sites in order to respect the privacy of the other students.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Birchland Elementary is fortunate to have a very supportive group of parents. The purpose of the group is to form a liaison between parents and the school in educational matters.

Parents/guardians of Birchland children are welcome members to our PAC Meetings. These occur once a month and are a great way for parents to network and build community as they support our students' learning.

BPAC Executive 2011/2012

Chair	TBA
Vice Chair	TBA
Secretary	Michelle Nikula
Treasurer	Donna Luteyn

Fraser Health Authority

Our school has the consultative services of a Public Health Nurse. Please contact the Fraser Health Authority at 604-777-8700 for more information.

Aboriginal Education

Aboriginal Programs for students of Aboriginal ancestry are offered throughout the district. For information about these programs please contact your school, or the Aboriginal Education Department at 604-945-7386.

STUDENT SAFETY

Bell Schedule

8:50	Students enter (bell)
8:55	Instruction begins (bell) PA announcements Attendance to office
10:25	Recess begins (no bell)
10:40	Recess ends (bell)
11:55	Lunch period begins (no bell) and students go outside to play
12:20	Students come in to eat (bell)
12:40	Lunch period ends (bell)
12:45	Instruction begins
2:55	Student dismissal

Playground Supervision

8:35 – 8:50	Teachers supervise
10:25 – 10:40	Teachers supervise
11:54 – 12:45	Noon Hour Supervisors

School Entry

Students enter and exit through their classroom outside door or designated door. Front doors are to be used by Parents and Guests only – they are not to be used by students, unless they are accompanied by an adult, or if it is an emergency.

Please do not send your child to school prior to 8:35 a.m. unless special arrangements have been made.

School Attendance

Please phone the school office to report your child's absence **before 8:50 a.m.**

Students' absences will be reported by teachers to the office at 8:55 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. each day

Students arriving late must report to the office before going to their classrooms.

Phone calls to parents and/or alternates will be made if a child is unaccounted for.

Parental Access/Court Orders

Please let us know if there are any special family circumstances of which we should be aware regarding the safety of your child.

Student Illness or Accident

Occasionally a child may become sick or injured while at school. When this happens, we will contact the parent(s) or alternate, in order that the child may seek medical attention or go home or to a caregiver as soon as possible.

Medical Information

If your child has a medical condition that requires precautionary treatment or medication at school please be sure to complete the required "Medical Alert Form" and/or the "Request for Administration of Medication at School" form. These forms must be completed, signed and returned to the school as soon as possible. This procedure complies with School Board procedures.

Emergency Procedures: Earthquake

If an earthquake should occur, students and teachers must duck under the nearest cover (desk or table), and cover both head and neck areas. Once the shaking has stopped, they are to count slowly to sixty (60). Taking extra clothing and emergency equipment with them, the class will then follow their teacher outside to their designated area. Students will remain at their designated area until their parents or an alternate picks them up and signs them out. All alternates must be consulted by you prior to listing them on the Emergency Release Form. This form will be distributed in September.

Emergency Procedures: Fire

When students hear the alarm bells they will quietly, and in orderly fashion, line up at the classroom door. They will follow the teacher-in-charge away from the building. Students are not to re-enter the building without authority of those in charge. Ms. Salloum (or designate) will conduct an attendance check and provide the necessary direction to staff.

Student Lunchtime Privileges

The daily lunch period is a time for students to enjoy a break in the school day as they eat a nourishing lunch and enjoy the fellowship of their classmates. We communicate established routines and guidelines to students in order to create an atmosphere that is relaxing and safe in the classroom while the students are eating.

Parents will be informed of student behaviour that is not in line with expectations. Repeated incidents could result in lunch privileges being revoked.

School Calendar

September 6	School Opens
September 23	Non-Instructional Day (District)
October 10	Thanksgiving Day
October 21	Non-Instructional Day (Provincial)
November 1	Non-Instructional Day (Birchland)
November 11	Remembrance Day
November 14	School Closed
December 16	Last day before Winter Break
January 3	School re-opens
January 27	Non-Instructional Day (Birchland)
February 17	Non-Instructional Day (District)
March 9	Last Day before Spring Break
March 26	School Re-opens
April 6	Good Friday
April 9	Easter Monday
April 20	Non-Instructional Day (District)
May 21	Victoria Day
June 28	Last day of school for students
June 29	Administrative Day/Schools Close

Hot Lunch Days

Hot Lunch Days are held every Tuesday throughout the year. Lunches are organized through "The Lunch Lady". They are thoroughly enjoyed by our students. Order forms are sent home in advance and should be returned by the date requested. Participation in this program is optional.

Field Trips / Parent Drivers



Field trips are an integral component of the school curriculum and serve as a means of extending educational experiences. Prior to all field trips, parents are required to complete a permission slip for

each student. No student will be denied educational opportunities offered at the school due to financial hardship.

Parents who volunteer to drive students on a field trip must meet the district requirements for driver insurance and provide a seat belt for each student. The vehicle must be maintained in good condition and the passenger seat may not be used if equipped with an airbag. Booster seats must be provided for students who require them. Smoking is not permitted in vehicles transporting students. Parent driver forms and Criminal Record Check must be completed by all parent drivers and kept on file at the school office.

School Based Team

The School Based Team approach is a means of providing support to students who are experiencing difficulties in school. Our School Based Team includes the Principal, Counsellor, Student Services department head, Learning Resource teacher(s), Speech Language Pathologist and the classroom teacher(s). Other District personnel may also be included. When a student's name is referred to the School Based Team by a classroom teacher, the team works to analyze the situation and develop a plan of action to assist the student. Parent involvement is, of course, crucial to the process. Parents will be informed if their child is referred.

Lost and Found

While we encourage all students to take care of their belongings, sometimes articles of clothing are left lying about. These items are placed in our Lost and Found box in the hallway by our "recess doors". Parents are encouraged to look through this box and on the hangers when visiting the school. Jackets and sweaters which have names in them are much easier to locate.

Students are advised not to bring any toys or articles of value to school. We do not wish any toys to go missing. Toys/games should be left at home for play. We provide a variety of outdoor equipment for play at recess and lunch.

Vandalism

We are proud of our school and want to work together to keep it inviting, safe and attractive. At Birchland we are members of Vandal Watch, a community organization that deals directly with specific prevention and intervention strategies to stop vandalism at our school. We appreciate your cooperation in reporting any vandalism which occurs after school hours to the RCMP at 604-945-1550.

Neighbourhood Walks

Throughout the school year, teachers may take their classes on neighbourhood walks accompanied by appropriate adult supervision. Please acknowledge on the tear-off form (page 7) that your child has permission to participate in neighbourhood walks throughout the school year. Separate permission slips will not be collected for such excursions.

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) Policies and Administrative Procedures

Complete copies of the following policies and administrative procedures are available for your viewing at the school office and on the district website: www.sd43.bc.ca Board of Education > Policies/Administrative Policies

1. District Code of Conduct – Policy 17

The Board believes it has a responsibility to establish expectations of students as part of its governance role for the District. The Board further believes that the responsibility for student discipline in school is shared among students, staff and parents. Students have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others and to become actively and productively involved in their own academic learning and social growth. Educators are responsible for establishing a positive school climate in which structure, support and encouragement assist the students in developing a sense of self-discipline and responsibility. Parents are responsible for establishing a positive learning atmosphere in the home, knowing school policies and procedures, supporting the school in the enactment of these policies and procedures, and encouraging their children to understand and respect these policies and procedures. To support these aims, the Board has established a District Code of Conduct for Students, which shall be followed in all schools.

Specifically

The Board believes that appropriate 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;
- attend classes punctually and regularly;
- work cooperatively and diligently at their studies and with home assignments;
- respect the rights of all persons within the school including peers, staff and parents;
- respect the legitimate authority of the school staff;
- respect the school's physical school facilities;
- respect the ethnic diversity of our school community;
- behave in a safe and responsible manner at all times; and
- not threaten, harass, bully, intimidate or assault, in any way, any person within the school community
- not be in possession or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol

2. Violence, Intimidation and Possession of Weapons - Policy 18

The Board believes that schools are purposeful places where students and staff must be able to work, learn and play without the threat of physical or psychological harm. Schools are characterized by sensitivity and respect for all individuals, an environment of non-violence, clear student behavioural expectations and disciplinary practices that are enforced consistently and fairly. The Board acknowledges its role in providing secure learning environments which are safe from threats, violence or intimidation.

3. Suspension of Students – AP (Administrative Procedure) 355

The effective management of student discipline is a necessity in establishing safe, caring and orderly school environments that foster student learning needs. When student misconduct occurs, the school and District must respond fairly, quickly, and effectively, imposing a disciplinary consequence that is appropriate to the circumstances and that reinforces for the student involved and students generally, appropriate standards of student behaviour.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the maintenance of student discipline and school rules. Under the general supervision of the Superintendent and subject to administrative procedures, a Principal and/or Vice Principal has the authority to suspend or remove a suspension imposed on a student.

4. Race Relations – AP 205

School District 43 acknowledges the challenge of becoming responsive to the needs of a pluralistic society and affirms that the racial, ethno-cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of its students, staff, and community is a source of enrichment and strength for Canada.

As an educational institution, the District has a special responsibility to develop positive values, attitudes, knowledge and practices by developing a framework which will promote and support equity, justice and access to all.

5. Personal, Discriminatory, and Sexual Harassment – AP 165

The District recognizes the right of all students and staff members to learn and work in an environment free from personal, discriminatory or sexual harassment.

The District, all staff members, students and people within school communities shall have a responsibility to promote, monitor and maintain learning environments and workplaces that are free from harassment.

6. District-Wide Network and Internet Appropriate Use – AP 140

The District endorses the provision of district-wide network and Internet services to support student learning. While there are many benefits, there is also potential for misuse. Students are not permitted to create, distribute or access any material which is not suitable for classroom learning. (See also our district brochures "Appropriate Use Guidelines for the Internet" and "Appropriate Use Guidelines for E-Mail". These are on the district website at www.sd43.bc.ca under News & Events/Publications).

7. Smoke Free Environment – AP 171
 The Board declares that all buildings under its jurisdiction and all school grounds shall be designated “smoke free”. This “no smoking” policy shall be followed by students, staff, parents and visitors at all times.

8. Closure of Schools for Extreme Weather Conditions – AP 132
 In the case of extreme weather conditions, the Superintendent of Schools has authority on behalf of the Board, to temporarily close a school.
Procedures: As a general expectation, parents should be advised that schools are open. If parents believe the local conditions are unsafe, they should keep their child at home or arrange his/her early dismissal. If schools are to be closed before morning classes begin, an announcement will be made on local radio stations CKNW (980), CKWX (1130) and CBC (690) by 8:00 am if possible.

9. Resolution of Student or Parent School Concerns – AP 380
 The District encourages students and/or parents to discuss their questions or concerns regarding the education of their children with school personnel as early and as directly as possible.
Procedures: Students or parents who disagree with or wish to question decisions or actions that are taken by teachers and/or administrators are expected to seek a resolution by pursuing the following steps:

- A. Teacher or Classroom Level Problem**
1. Discuss the matter directly with the teacher whose judgement or decision is being questioned.
 2. If not resolved, discuss your concern with the Principal.
 3. If still unsatisfied with the outcome, discuss your concern with the Zone Assistant Superintendent. (contact the Board office at 604-939-9201 or email information@sd43.bc.ca)
 4. Unresolved matters may be referred to the Board.
- B. Principal or School Level Problem**
1. Discuss directly with the Principal the action, policy, procedure or practice being questioned.
 2. If not resolved, refer to the Zone Assistant Superintendent. (see contact information above)
 3. If not resolved, refer to the Board as per Board Policy 13

It is expected that School District personnel will seek a resolution to the problem as quickly as possible.



PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL

Every student must return this signed form to the school office.

I have reviewed School District No. 43 Coquitlam’s Board Policies and Administrative Procedures and discussed them with my child. Complete copies of the above policies and regulations are available for your viewing at the school office, or on our Website: www.sd43.bc.ca – Board of Education > Policies/Administrative Procedures.

Please ✓ to indicate completion.

- I have read the Birchland Handbook, pages 2 to 5
- I have read the School District 43 School Policies, pages 6 & 7 and discussed them with my child
- I give permission for my child to participate in neighbourhood walks (refer to page 5)
- I give permission for my child’s picture to appear in public broadcast or other media release, including the Birchland school portal (refer to page 3)

_____ *Student Name*

_____ *Parent/Guardian Signature*

_____ *Date*

Parents Partnering in Learning

So...What About Homework?

At Birchland, we believe that our primary-aged students (grades Kindergarten to Grade 3) benefit from spending time beyond the school day playing and socializing. On occasion, our intermediate students (grades 4 & 5) may bring work home that was not completed during the school day or that is related to a project or larger assignment that requires additional attention at home. You may find the following tips helpful:



- Try to set aside a special, quiet place with good lighting for homework.
- Keep basic supplies like paper, pens, markers and rulers in a box in the homework area.
- Try to have a regular time set aside each day for homework.
- Be positive, supportive and encouraging. Remember to remind your child to look for areas to improve the quality of their work before calling it complete.

SOLO6



At Birchland, we are fortunate to have entered into a partnership with Don Johnston, Inc. (leading company in developing Assistive Educational Technology). All of our Birchland students now have access to SOLO6 (a suite of four programs with learning supports for reading and writing) at school and are also entitled to load the suite onto their home computer for as long as they are students at Birchland. Please see Ms. Snowden or your child's teacher for more information.

DAILY FAMILY READING AT HOME

Whether your child is at a pre-reading stage or is an advanced reader, daily "family reading" time is an extremely important factor in supporting success at school. Reading to your child helps to develop comprehension, fluency and an appreciation for the knowledge and joy that books provide. Our neighbourhood library, Terry Fox Library, has many programs and online resources that can provide a variety of fiction and non-fiction titles for all ages and abilities. One such resource is the free "Tumblebook" collection that can be enjoyed from your home computer:

http://www.tumblebooks.com/library/asp/home_tumblebooks.asp

PARENT VOLUTEERS

We recognize our parents as the first and most powerful teachers in the lives of our students. For this reason, we welcome you to become part of our learning team in a variety of ways. Whether you are able to join in on classroom activities, special events, field trips or BPAC duties....we welcome and appreciate any involvement. Students benefit from the adults in their world joining together to support their learning experience. The district requires a Criminal Record Check and volunteer forms to be completed and on file in the office. Forms are available at the office.