

# Code of Conduct 2017-18



**"Take the High Road"**

**May 2017  
Hillcrest Middle School**

## **School Mission:**

**"The Hillcrest School Community is committed to providing educational opportunities in a safe and respectful environment that encourages students to become responsible life-long learners, both individually and cooperatively."**

# Hillcrest Middle School Code of Conduct

## I. INTRODUCTION

Our school code of conduct has been developed in accordance with ministry requirements as outlined in the Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools' document.

At Hillcrest, we are committed to providing educational opportunities in a safe, caring, orderly, and respectful environment that encourages students to become responsible life-long learners academically, socially, individually and cooperatively. Featured in our school planner with the District Code of Conduct and School Policies, our Code is accessible to students, parents and staff. Although this set of policies is detailed, we seek to simply state our expectations in order to ensure that Hillcrest is a safe, nurturing educational environment.

## II. CODE OF CONDUCT: KEY ELEMENTS

- 1. Process:** Our Code is reviewed annually by administration and teachers during staff meetings and team meetings. We consult with parents via communication in school newsletters, through our school website and at PAC meetings. Student input is gathered in class meeting and super-block (team meeting) settings.
- 2. Communication:** The two main themes in our Code of Conduct are Respect and Safety. These two themes form the context of all our communications about the Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is published in our September Welcome Package, accessible on our website, reviewed by administration, staff teams, individual teachers with students and our PAC. The Code of Conduct is reviewed with ALL STAFF in the fall and then specific sections are revisited throughout the year as issues arise. The Code of Conduct is made available to temporary staff in our TOC/Casual EA handbooks. School staff members are asked to refer to the Code of Conduct with students and parents when discussing behavior concerns.
- 3. Implementation:** At the beginning of the school year it is expected that parents read and sign consent/understanding to the Code of Conduct published in the September Welcome Package. Parents are asked to reinforce the school's expectations with students. The Code of Conduct is implemented among students by introducing it to students during team-wide first week activities in September. Key behavioral expectations are then reviewed with students throughout the year in assemblies, Tambellini Times, restorative sessions and in core class settings. Instructional methods include multimedia, discussion, role playing and class meetings. In addition, students involved in our Hillcrest Spirit Squad (student leadership) are given opportunities to collaboratively, with teacher facilitation, create their own set of expectations regarding events such as dances. The Code of Conduct is implemented by teaching staff, in part by being the basis for establishing class expectations and "constitutions" at the start of the school year. Hillcrest staff takes time in the September staff meeting to review key concepts in the Code of Conduct and make a commitment to modeling socially responsible behavior across the school. Administrators stress to all staff the importance of positive modeling. Administrators' discussions with individual students about specific behavior or discipline issues usually include references to the Code of Conduct and resolving conflicts peacefully. Our school motto, "Take the High Road" embodies the high expectations we have of our students' conduct and level of responsibility.

#### **4. Monitoring and Review**

The Hillcrest Code of Conduct is monitored throughout the year during the course of its implementation (see above). It is formally reviewed annually in the spring in a collaborative process involving:

- Tambellini Time meetings with all students in their teams. These involve a review of the themes and content of the Code of Conduct, followed by a feedback session in which students give their suggestions and questions.
- Spring PAC meeting with parents
- Online survey with all parents able to participate
- Discussion at a spring Team Leader Meeting and Staff Meeting about the Code of Conduct and what conduct is deemed acceptable and what conduct is deemed unacceptable

Hillcrest Middle's Administration monitors the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct by using a systematic data collection strategy. The school's Behavior Incident Form has been constructed to capture key information about specific incidents. This data is reviewed on a regular basis for analysis and evaluation of our students' conduct. Additionally there is a systematic method for tracking student lates and following up in the form of teacher discussions, administrator discussion, and communication with parents.

#### **5. Alignment**

The Hilltop/Hillside Families of Schools have recently initiated discussions about Codes of Conduct at all three levels. Our Code of Conduct is approaching greater alignment with the codes of our local family of schools and with middle schools across the district.

#### **6. Standards**

Hillcrest Middle School's Code of Conduct is aligned with District and Provincial policies, administrative procedures, the Criminal Code of Canada, and 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. (Min. Or. 6 (a)).

##### **a) Statement of Purpose**

The Hillcrest Code of Conduct is intended to foster and maintain a safe, respectful and orderly learning environment that encourages students to become responsible life-long learners and to reach their highest level of academic and social potential.

##### **b) Conduct Expectations**

These expectations apply to behavior at school, during school-organized or sponsored activities, and behavior beyond these times (including on-line behavior) that negatively impacts the safe, caring, or orderly environment of the school, and/or student learning.

##### **Acceptable Conduct:**

Students are expected to act in a respectful and safe manner at all times during the school day and while travelling to and from school. This includes arriving at and leaving school and attending school functions at any location. Our motto is "Take the High Road" and we expect

our students to make safe and respectful choices and decisions that bring credit to themselves and the school.

At Hillcrest, we believe 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:

- respect the legitimate authority of the school staff
- be aware of and obey all school expectations
- respect the rights of all persons within the school community including peers, staff and parents
- respect the school's physical school facilities
- behave in a safe and responsible manner at all times
- not be in possession or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- students shall not discriminate against others on the basis of the race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, family status, age, religion, sex or sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability, or for any other reason set out in the Human Rights Code of British Columbia (Section 7 and 8), nor shall a student publish or display anything that would indicate an intention to discriminate against another, or expose them to contempt or ridicule, on the basis of any such grounds
- 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 otherwise

**Unacceptable Conduct:**

Student conduct that interferes with the learning, safety or well-being of others or him/herself; or the maintenance of an orderly and respectful environment is considered unacceptable. As per Section 8 of Human Rights Code of British Columbia, students shall not discriminate against others on the basis of the race, religion, colour, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, family status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or physical or mental disability. Furthermore, as per Section 7 of the Human Rights Code of British Columbia, no student shall publish or display anything that would indicate an intention to discriminate against another, or expose them to contempt or ridicule, on the aforementioned bases.

The following is a list of behaviors that will result in discipline; however, the list of unacceptable behaviors is not restricted to the examples provided.

Unacceptable conduct is demonstrated by behaviors such as:

- Engaging in any form of rough play, physical violence, bullying or harassment
- Being disrespectful to others or the school environment with words or actions
- Bringing unsafe, illegal or inappropriate substances or items to school including electronic cigarettes and vaporizers
- Engaging in the use of technology, on or off school grounds, that creates a negative learning environment

A search by school officials of a student under their authority or a search of student property may be undertaken if the school has reasonable grounds to believe a school rule has been or will be violated, and that the evidence of that violation will be found in the location or on the person

of the student being searched. Students know that their teachers and other school authorities are responsible for providing a safe learning environment and maintaining order and discipline at school. As a result, they must know that, where reasonable grounds exist, this may require searches of students, their lockers and their personal effects and the seizure of prohibited items.

Students should also be aware that the schools may collect, use and disclose personal information about students for the purposes of investigating and addressing student misconduct, safety and maintaining order and discipline in school. Such collection and use of student information may include information that is obtained from witnesses or collected from other secondary information sources (e.g. social media). All personal information of students collected by the school will be collected in compliance with and under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ss. 26(a),(b), and(c)) and the School Act. Questions about the collection, use or disclosure of student personal information should be directed to the Associate Director of Information and Learning Technologies Stephen Whiffin, at [swhiffin@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:swhiffin@sd43.bc.ca).

### **Rising Expectations:**

As students gain maturity and knowledge, we expect a higher standard of responsibility, self-discipline and accountability.

### **Consequences**

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 in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment. In order to respond consistently and fairly to infractions, the severity and frequency of the infraction and the age and maturity of the child are considered by school staff.

Consequences to address breaches of the Code of Conduct are intended to provide the student with a life-lesson rather than being merely punitive. Our objective is to work with students to help them understand what constitutes inappropriate behavior and to encourage students to implement strategies to prevent these behaviors from recurring. This may include the use of ***restorative practices*** where appropriate.

### **Restorative Practice**

As a school and District, we recognize the importance of modeling respectful and responsible processes for managing conflict. Whenever possible, we try to use a restorative approach to resolving conflict and teaching pro- social behaviors.

The fundamental premise of restorative practice is that people are happier, more cooperative, productive, and more likely to make positive changes to their lives, when those in authority do things “with them”, rather than “to them” or “for them”. (International Institute for Restorative Practices <http://www.iirp.edu/what-is-restorative-practices.php>). As a result, a focus of behavior intervention should be to help an offender recognize and repair any harm done. Furthermore, the purpose is to teach the offender moving forward, and then reinforce positive behaviors, in order to return the offender to the school community stronger, and more resilient than before the offense.

Every effort will be made to support all students. However, if there are ongoing conduct issues after having implemented restorative interventions, more traditional discipline approaches may be used, separate or in conjunction with restorative interventions. All disciplinary decisions will be made with respect to the individual and context, and responses to conduct issues will take into consideration the student's age, maturity, and past conduct .

\*\*\*Special considerations may apply to the imposition of consequences on a student with special needs if the student is unable to comply with this Code of Conduct due to a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioral nature.

Serious breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in a suspension when the child's presence at school creates an unsafe environment for him/herself, other students or school staff.

#### **Notification**

Parents and guardians will be notified should there be a serious breach of the Code of Conduct. Parental involvement is necessary to help the child adjust his/hers behavior in order to meet Code of Conduct expectations. Where the breach of the Code of Conduct involves other students, the following parties will receive notification:

- parents of student offender(s)
- parents of student victim(s)
- appropriate school staff
- school district officials if necessary
- police and/or other agencies as required by law

#### **\*\*\*Use of Cell Phones or Electronic Devices in the School Community**

Cell phones or electronic devices, which may include cameras, text or video capabilities, must be used appropriately at school and during school activities. Students may be subject to discipline for on or off campus misuse of technology that negatively impacts an individual or the school community. During the school day, students within a specific setting, must have the permission of the staff member and be under their direct supervision to use technology.