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October 6, 2023

A Message to SD43 families: Safe and Appropriate Halloween

Halloween across all schools in SD43 is a fun and festive day which brings the school community together. Typically, the time around Halloween is incident-free and very respectful.

From time to time, a few students “in character” push the boundaries of what is socially acceptable, or what is appropriate behavior in schools, sometimes at the expense of others. With that in mind, for student safety and school climate reasons, and to ensure that every student and adult in our community enjoys the time around Halloween, we would like your assistance in reinforcing these guidelines with your children:

- Students in costume should be easily recognizable and/or identify themselves to any staff member when queried. Also, students “in character” are to conduct themselves appropriately. Behaviors which intimidate, harass, or humiliate members of the community do not contribute to a fun, festive, and safe environment.
- Replica weapons (guns, knives, etc.) are inappropriate, as are costumes which are hyper-sexualized, or costumes which depict elements of sexual exploitation.
- It is also important to note that costumes which portray negative stereotypes or that demean or make fun of any group of people are inappropriate. Costumes should not make light of anyone’s religious, cultural, ethnic or racial group.

As a reminder, by law and School District expectations, the use and possession of firecrackers or fireworks at school is strictly prohibited. This pertains to students before, during or after school, on or offsite.

With respect for each other, we can avoid any disruption to school communities in the form of vandalism and/or disrespectful, potentially dangerous behaviour. Students and parents need to be mindful that inappropriate behaviour will be addressed by school administration under the authority granted by the BC School Act and with the involvement of police where appropriate.

Please refer to these readily available public websites for more information:

<https://www.coquitlam.ca/286/Fire-Safety-Tips>

<https://www.portcoquitlam.ca/city-services/fire-emergency-services/fire-safety-information/>

<https://www.portmoody.ca/en/city-services/fall-safety-tips.aspx#Halloween-Safety>

Have a safe and happy Halloween.

Sincerely,

Patricia Gartland
Superintendent/CEO