



PITT RIVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Code of Conduct

I. INTRODUCTION

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 taken 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.

Pitt River Community Middle School staff, parents, and students, were involved in a process of developing this Code of Conduct based on our collective belief of what is important to us, what matters about education and learning and the positive contributions we expect our students to make. The Code of Conduct has been reviewed and adjusted with student, staff, and parent input on an annual basis to reflect current school, community, and provincial standards.

II. CODE OF CONDUCT: KEY ELEMENTS

1. Process

Pitt River Community Middle School surveyed staff and students to determine what they believed to be key components to building a safe and caring school culture through questionnaires, surveys and meetings. Key questions asked:

- What do you want your school to look like?
- How do you want your school to feel?
- How should people be treated in your school?

Pitt River Students and Staff generated a list of words that represented the type of culture they would like to see at Pitt River. Over the course of the year we will be actively focusing on the following Core Value Themes – Kindness, Inclusion, Happiness, Passion, and Resiliency.

Students and teachers co-created a symbol of the type of culture they would like to see at Pitt River in order to guide the conversation and remind us of our focus.



2. Communication

Expectations regarding acceptable conduct are made known to all students, parents and school staff, as well as to temporary staff and visitors. Our Code of Conduct is clearly posted on our school website and is accessible to the public. Additional copies are available in the office for families without internet access.

Expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct are communicated to regular staff members in a staff meeting at the beginning of the year. During the school year, temporary staff, noon hour supervisors, and new staff members are asked to review our Code of Conduct when they are so assigned. Protocols while acting as citizens of the school are also made known to students, parents, coaches and involved members of the greater community.

The Code of Conduct is clearly presented on the school website. Students and parents are asked to review the Code of Conduct, School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures at the beginning of the year and sign off.

3. Implementation:

Behavioural expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct are consistently taught and actively promoted. Responses to unacceptable behaviour are based consistently on sound principles, restorative practices and are appropriate to the context.

The elements in the Code of Conduct will be implemented in numerous ways throughout the school year. Strategies and structures include direct classroom teaching, P.A. announcements, parent newsletter articles, as well as ongoing modeling by all adult members (teachers, staff and parents) of the school community. Students involved in our student leadership activities and clubs regularly assist in implementation through modeling, team and school- wide activities, P.A. announcements, peer tutoring, assisting with friendship groups and special events.

Teachers refer to Pitt River Middle's Code of Conduct during their introductory September lessons and revisit expectations as needed throughout the school year.

| <i>Punitive</i> | <i>Restorative</i> |
|--|---|
| Misbehavior defined as breaking school rules or letting the school down. | Misbehavior defined as harm (emotional/mental/physical) done to one person/group by another. |
| Focus is on what happened and establishing blame or guilt. | Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future. |
| Adversarial relationship and process include an authority figure with the power to decide on penalty, in conflict with the wrongdoer. | Dialogue and negotiation, with everyone involved in the communication in cooperation with each other. |
| Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish, deter or prevent. | Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices. |
| Attention to rules and adherence to due process. | Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome. |
| Conflict/wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract; individual versus school. | Conflict/wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflicts with opportunity for learning. |
| One social injury compounded by another. | Focus on repair of social injury/damage. |
| School community as spectators, represented by member of staff dealing with the situation; those directly affected uninvolved and powerless. | School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment. |
| Accountability defined in terms of receiving punishment. | Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility for choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm. |

4. Monitoring and Review

Conduct is continuously monitored to ensure codes reflect current and emerging situations and are contributing to school safety and a positive school climate.

The Code of Conduct is reviewed and improved in light of evidence gathered and/or relevant research, and is revisited as part of a regular cycle of policy review. Data gathered from class reviews, classroom evaluations, and monthly school leadership discussions, as well as feedback from students, support staff, and PAC will be used to review, evaluate and monitor the Code of Conduct.

5. Alignment:

Pitt River Middle School's Code of Conduct is aligned with the BC Human Rights Code, compatible with those from other middle schools in the district as well as the family of schools in our geographical area. It is also in alignment with the District Code of Conduct. Discussions with the members of our community of schools take place regularly throughout the school year. Structured opportunities to discuss these issues occur during district meetings such as superintendent meetings and middle level meetings.

6. Standards:

Pitt River Community Middle 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.

The purpose of Pitt River Middle's Code of Conduct:

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.

Conduct Expectations

These expectations apply to behaviour at school, during school-organized or sponsored activities, and behaviours beyond these times that negatively impacts the safe, caring or orderly environment of the school, and/or student learning.

Conduct expectations may be connected to individual acts of bullying, harassment, physical violence, use of banned substances, and illegal acts 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

- 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, physical or mental disability, or regarding any accommodation, service or facility customarily available to the public because of Indigenous identity. 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. Using/naming a physical illness, disability or condition to threaten, harass or intimidate others in the community is unacceptable

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.

Rising expectations

As students mature and progress through their three years at middle school, it is expected that the level of personal accountability will increase and that leadership skills will develop and progress, in preparation for successful high school experiences.

While at middle school students are expected to:

- take responsibility for their actions;
- exhibit socially responsible behaviours;
- understand that consequences for irresponsible or unsafe behaviour also escalate accordingly;
- understand that levels of maturity, personal responsibility, self-discipline, modeling and leadership are expected to improve

Consequences

- Wherever possible and appropriate, the focus will be on consequences that are restorative in nature rather than punitive.
- Responses to unacceptable conduct may include any/or all of the following (but not limited to): discussion with the student, discussion with a staff member and student, discussion with administration, office referrals, telephone call home, meeting with parent(s);
- Small group mediation and/or conflict resolution (student to student)
- Student-initiated consequence (with guidance from administration)
- School or community counseling
- Alternative-to-suspension meetings and/or programs
- Community service
- Behaviour plan
- Formal suspension Level I, II or III for serious or dangerous behaviours

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 behavioural nature.

Appropriate consequences are given on an individual basis.

All reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of a code of conduct will be made.

Searches

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 Director of Instruction and Chief Information Officer Stephen Whiffin, at swhiffin@sd43.bc.ca.

Notification

In instances where serious violations of the code of conduct have occurred, school officials may have a responsibility to communicate to other parties. These parties may include some and/all of the following:

- Parents of all students who have been involved and affected;
- School district officials, as required by school district policy;
- Police and/or agencies, as required by law;
- All parents within the school community, in cases where it is important to reassure all members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate actions to address the matter.

Electronic Device Policy

Pitt River values face-to-face social interactions and as such limits student access to personal devices during unstructured times. Unless used under the supervision of a teacher and for an educational or medical reason, cell phones are not to be in use between 8:40AM and 2:45PM. Communication with home is encouraged to be done through our main office, although parents are encouraged to communicate outside of class hours.

Social Media

Internet safety and social media communication is the jurisdiction of both home and school. Middle school students require significant adult support to navigate social media safely and responsibly. While we are committed to educating our students about positive and safe choices on social media, our focus is on teaching and learning and social media use will not be permitted during school hours.

Pitt River Middle – Respectful Attire

Pitt River Middle is an institute of learning which brings together many different families with varying values and cultural beliefs. Within our code of conduct, students have the right to dress in a way that reflects individual expression of identity and socio-cultural norms. Students have the responsibility to dress modestly and with respect for the health and safety requirements of all educational activities.

To promote an emotionally and physically safe space for all individuals, students are asked to refrain from wearing attire that:

- represents smoking, alcohol or drug use, or other inappropriate paraphernalia;
- displays words or pictures that are derogatory, insulting, racist, sexist, threatening, violent or homophobic
- hides their face (hats, sunglasses and hoods) to ensure safety and identification of members of our community. Classroom specific rules may apply at teacher discretion within their own rooms.
- is inappropriate for the educational purposes of the learning environment. Clothing choices that expose underwear, buttocks, midriff, pectorals and breasts are not permitted. We ask that the modesty of the learning environment and common sense be the guide.

The school code of conduct is in place to ensure that students have a guideline for safe conduct in their place of learning. It is an ever-evolving document where changes to language or procedure will be discussed with parents, staff and students. The goal is always to create a safe place physically and emotionally for our students.