

Code of Conduct 2023 - 2024



June 2023

Hillcrest Middle School

School Mission:

Our Stories Matter

At Hillcrest, we engage and empower our diverse young people by building connections within a collaborative and inclusive school community.

Hillcrest Middle School Code of Conduct

I. INTRODUCTION

School boards and schools are entrusted through the School Act with the authority to establish codes of conduct. While recognizing the autonomy of these bodies and acknowledging the efforts they have already undertaken to ensure school climates are as positive as possible, the provincial standards described below are provided to assist

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. Our Code is accessible to students, parents, and staff. Although this set of policies is detailed, we seek to simply state our expectations to ensure that Hillcrest is a safe, nurturing educational environment.

II. CODE OF CONDUCT: KEY ELEMENTS

- 1) **Process:** Our Code of conduct was developed through a collaborative and communicative process that involved all members of the community: students, parents, and staff. It is reviewed each year.

The following was done for the 2023/24 Code of Conduct Process:

- Reviewed annually by administration and teachers during staff meetings and team meetings.
- Communication in school newsletters, through our school website and at PAC meetings.
- Student focus group led by admin to take a deep dive into the document
- Student input is gathered in class meetings and team or grade level settings.
- The final version of the Code of Conduct will be printed and communicated to all partner group

- 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 the Code of Conduct when they are assigned to our school. Protocols are also made known to students, parents, coaches and involved members of the community. It is also displayed in prominent locations in the school.

The Code of Conduct is clearly presented on the school website. Both students and parents were asked to review the Code of Conduct, School Board Policies and Administrative at the beginning of the year and sign off indicating they reviewed and discussed expectations with their child. Families who join Hillcrest part way through the year will also be expected to do the same.

3) Implementation:

The Code of Conduct is implemented among students by introducing it to students in September. Key behavioral expectations are then reviewed with students throughout the year in assemblies, PA announcements, restorative sessions and in core class settings. Instructional methods include multimedia, discussion, role playing and class meetings. In addition, students involved in our Hillcrest School Leadership teams are given opportunities to educate about the expectations.

The Code of Conduct is implemented by teaching staff and is the basis for establishing class expectations and Class Charters at the start of the school year. Hillcrest staff takes time in the September staff meeting to review the Code of Conduct. Particularly during the month of September, we will be modeling socially responsible behavior in all school settings. Continuation of our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee to discuss, support and monitor our school's progress in ongoing conversation. 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.

4) Monitoring and Review

Conduct is continuously monitored to ensure the codes reflect current and emerging situations and are contributing to school safety. The Code of Conduct is a living document that will shift and be adapted in response to new and/or revised expectations.

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

- 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.
- Class Circles and Class Meetings focusing on developing the five competencies of: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making all focusing on strategies and skills for students to use when dealing with stress and inappropriate conduct and work issues.
- Spring PAC meeting to consult with parents
- Discussion at a spring Team Leader Meeting and Staff Meeting about the Code of Conduct and where additional follow up and modelling is planned for.

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 school's physical school facilities.
- respect the diversity of our school community.
- behave in a safe and responsible manner always;
- not threaten, harass, bully, intimidate or assault, in any way, any person within the school community: in person or online
- not be in possession or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol

Our Hillcrest Middle School Code of Conduct is also supported by Policy 18 (Violence, Intimidation, and Possession of Weapons),

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 nonviolence, clear student behavioral 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.

Administrative Procedure 355 (Suspension of Students),

Suspension of Students – AP 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 behavior.

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.

Section 85 of the School Act, Policy 13 (Appeals Regarding Student Matters)

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 Assistant Superintendent (contact the Board office at 604-939-9201).
4. Unresolved matters may be referred to the Board as per Board Policy 13.

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 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.

The BC Human Rights Code.

“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."

Tobacco and Vapour Products Free Environment – AP 171

The Board declares that all buildings under its jurisdiction and all school grounds shall be designated "tobacco and vapour product free". This "no smoking" policy shall be followed by students, staff, parents, and visitors at all times. This policy also includes the use of vapes and electronic smoking paraphernalia. No employee or visitor can use tobacco or vapour products of any kind on school property.

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 and posted on the district website.

5) 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)). 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 basis.

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, social, and emotional 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 always expected to act in a respectful and safe manner during the school day and while travelling to and from school. This includes arriving at and leaving school and

representing the school community at any location, or while taking part in school functions. We expect our students to make safe and respectful choices and decisions that bring credit to themselves and Hillcrest Middle school.

To this end students are expected to:

- Speak and act in a respectful manner towards other students, staff, and visitors so that words and/or actions do not cause injury or discomfort to others
- be aware of and obey all school expectations so that Hillcrest is an environment that is safe and caring place for all to learn
- respect the rights of all persons within the school community including peers, staff, and parents
- engage in responsible behaviour in all learning and school activities (attending classes regularly and on time, being prepared for class, completing all assignments thorough and in a timely manner, and using good manners and good common sense)
- respect the school's physical school facilities
- Always behave in a safe and responsible manner; report to a staff member, in a timely manner (in advance if possible) of an unsafe event, individual or situation.
- not be in possession or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- Practice acceptable use of technology on or off the school grounds according to the District #43 Digital Citizenship for Students policy
- students shall not discriminate against others based on 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, based on any such grounds

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

Restorative Practices:

As a school and as a District, we recognize the importance of modeling respectful and responsible processes for managing conflict. Whenever possible, we try to use a restorative approach to resolve 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 a student recognize and repair any harm done. Furthermore, the purpose is to teach the student moving forward, and then reinforce positive behaviors, to return the student to the school community stronger, and more resilient than

before the offense. Teachers have committed to completing the IIRP restorative practices training as part of their professional development this year.

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.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES PRINCIPLES

1. Restorative Practices focuses on harms rather than rules or persons and the consequent needs of both parties and communities.
2. Restorative Practices addresses obligations of the student resulting from those harms, as well as the community's obligations to both parties.
3. Restorative Practices uses inclusive, collaborative processes.
4. Restorative Practices involves all individuals (victims, offenders, parents, students, staff, and faculty) who have a legitimate stake in each situation.
5. Restorative Practices seeks to put right the wrongs that have been done, so that all parties feel safe and valued, and individuals feel restoration to the school community has happened.

Students are expected to:

- *Follow Section 8 of Human Rights Code of British Columbia, as listed above in our Alignment Section*
- *Follow Section 7 of the Human Rights Code of British Columbia, as listed above in our Alignment Section*
- Understand and respect the rights of everyone in our community
- Treat all students and staff members with respect
- Act in a safe, caring, and responsible manner, respecting personal space and property
- Engage in purposeful learning activities in a productive manner
- Respect the right of students to learn and teachers to facilitate learning
- Follow the Classroom/ School Charters for all community members.
- Take pride in their middle school and respect the surrounding community.
- Follow the Technology Charter and use computers, cell phones, tablets or electronic devices that may include cameras, text, or video capabilities, appropriately and respectfully as instructed by the classroom teacher and to use technology for school purposes
- Cell phones are NOT considered a device and should be turned off and stored away from 8:30 am – 3:00 pm. This includes texting, phoning, gaming, responding to notifications or any other SM.

Unacceptable Conduct:

Student conduct that interferes with the learning, safety or well-being of others or him/herself/themselves; or the maintenance of an orderly and respectful environment is considered unacceptable.

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 – in person or online
- 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, vaporizers and/or weapons
- Engaging in the use of technology, on or off school grounds, that creates a negative learning environment or uses the technology to harass or inflict harm on another person
- Using/naming a physical illness, disability, or condition to threaten, harass or intimidate others in the community is unacceptable

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 Assistant Superintendent Stephen Whiffin, at swhiffin@sd43.bc.ca.

Use of Cell Phones in the BYOD School Community

Cell phones are NOT a substitute for a laptop, tablet, or iPad device. Cell phones must be turned off and stored away between the hours 8:30 am – 3:00 pm. Cell phones should be locked in student lockers throughout the day. Should a student require it, their cell phone can be turned into the office storage pocket each day and picked up at the end of the day. Certain students may require a cell phone plan. Students should not be using phones to call or text parents if they are unwell or need something from home.

The protocol if students need to contact home is the following:

1) Student reports issue to a Staff member; 2) Staff member phones office to alert family; 3) Office staff will connect with parent(s) and create a care plan for the student; 4) Office staff will coordinate with classroom teacher and then student will be directed.

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.

Respectful School Clothing:

Statement of Purpose

The school district is committed to providing students with learning environments that are safe, responsive, and inclusive. The district recognizes that decisions about dress reflect individual expression of identity, socio-cultural norms, and that they are personal. As well, the responsibility for personal dress and grooming primarily resides with students and their parents. Clothing that is comfortable, clean, and modest best meets the needs of the middle school community.

Hillcrest Middle School is a community which brings together many different families with varying values and cultural beliefs. The expectation of school culture is one of decency and respect for all students, staff, parents, and visitors. We ask that common sense be the guide and that as a community we are sensitive to others. Students are expected to wear clothing and jewelry that:

- Conform with established health and safety requirements for the intended activity.
- Do not represent or promote smoking, alcohol, or drugs.
- Use respectful language.
- Do not depict or promote violence, racism, sexism, or discrimination in any form.
- Are not intimidating to others
- To remove all hoodies inside so we recognize our students as part of our Hillcrest community.

Ultimately, the individual has the responsibility to apply the dress guidelines and we, as a community, have the responsibility to teach and guide the importance of respect and caring when necessary. If any person dresses in an inappropriate manner, the student should be advised personally and discretely and given an opportunity to meet school district guidelines. Respect for the learning environment is the guideline.

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 a negative impact on the school. 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.

We believe that all children can learn socially responsible behaviors.

- Consequences of not meeting behavioural expectations are based on what is best for the student. How can we best help him/her/them make a better choice next time? Consequences of unacceptable behaviour must take account of the student's age, maturity, and special needs, if any. 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.
- Restorative Conversations Process – a collaborative discussion process that engages conflicting parties and witnesses to the event.

In the conference or circles, the four restorative questions will be discussed:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

When the incident in question inflicted harm on another person, four additional questions will be asked on behalf of the person(s) harmed:

- What did you think when you realized what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

From (*The International Institute for Restorative Practices*, www.iirp.org)

Restorative and/or preventative, rather than punitive consequences will be applied in progressively escalating steps, depending on the severity and persistence of the difficulty.

Some possible consequences might be:

- Apologize/fix problem
- Discussion with teacher/discussion with administrator
- Small group(s) discussion
- Student initiated consequences (led by admin)
- Written apology
- School or community counselling
- Alternative to Suspension program
- Behaviour plan
- School service
- Parent phone call/ parent meeting/ student timeout with parent guardian
- Loss of noon hour/nutrition break
- Formal suspension Level I, II or III
- Restorative Circle

- Out-of-school suspension

Note: 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/themselves, other students, or school staff.

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.

The school will take 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.

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.

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/or 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 other agencies, as required by law
- All parents within the school community, in cases where it is important to reassure all member of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate actions to address the matter.

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/her/their behavior 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