

# École Montgomery Middle School Code of Conduct

## I. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Conduct is a result of collaboration between the parents, students and staff of the École Montgomery Middle School Community and is designed to reflect and clearly communicate what we, as a school community, value and expect in terms of student behaviour.

We believe that safe, caring and orderly schools are developed by committed, thoughtful school communities using appropriate and ever-improving policies, procedures and practices. École Montgomery Middle School's Code of Conduct outlines school expectations and acceptable student behaviour, as directed by the *School Act* 85 (2) (c) and the 2007 Ministerial Order, "Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct".

## II. CODE OF CONDUCT: KEY ELEMENTS

### 1. Process

The École Montgomery Middle School Administration coordinated a process of gathering input from students, parents and staff. Students gave input through their core classes and Community Circles. Staff members gave input and made recommendations through staff and pro-d meetings. Parents were invited to provide written or verbal feedback. The result is a code of conduct that represents the values and beliefs of our school community.

The School Leadership Team, staff, PAC and students review the Code of Conduct annually.

### 2. Communication

The school will take the following steps to communicate expectations to students and the greater school community:

- Our school code of conduct is posted on our school website and, as such, is available to the public: <http://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/montgomery>
- Our school code of conduct is distributed at the beginning of each year to all staff, parents and students via email.
- The code of conduct is included in the student planner which each student receives.
- When students start at our school mid-year, they receive the code of conduct in their planner and we ask parents to review the code with their child.
- The code of conduct is posted near the office along with information about what it means to be a school using Restorative Practices together with our Student and Staff Charters.
- Monthly newsletters which include aspects of the code conduct and updates on meetings for PAC parents
- Key elements will be reviewed with students during opening week with Monty Culture School Sessions and taught explicitly throughout the year as part of our R.O.C.K.S. Social Responsibility Program and during school wide assemblies
- All school members participate in a weekly Community Circles session based upon Restorative Circles in Schools

### **3. Implementation**

Each student receives direct instruction on our school's code of conduct during the first weeks of school. Parents are asked each September to read and discuss the section of the planner to ensure that the code of conduct has been reviewed. This supports that there is reinforcement of the code of conduct both at home and school. At the beginning of each school year expectations are clearly stated through a week of explicit Monty Culture Sessions with the school administration and Team teacher discussions. As well, all fieldtrip notices require parents sign indicating their understanding that students are responsible for adhering to the school's code of conduct while on fieldtrips and outings.

1. Community Circles: Our students meet weekly in smaller circle groups to learn a wide range of social communication skills.
2. Use of Restorative Practices as a method to help students deal with solving problems.
3. Creation of Class Charters, School and Staff Charters, Technology Charters and other in class based Social Emotional Learning (S.E.L.) activities.
4. Continuation of a SEL committee with a re-focus on the following priorities:
  1. Restorative Practices
  2. Monty ROCKS (Respect, Organization, Cooperation, Kindness, and Safety)
  3. Community Circles

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

The Code of Conduct undergoes annual review and revision, ensuring opportunities for all stakeholders to have a voice in assessing the effectiveness of the code of conduct in addressing current school safety issues. Our S.E.L. Committee will work to develop this code of conduct into a document that fully reflects the progress of our school with an emphasis on Restorative Practices that are used throughout our Community Circles and Restitution Model of building a safe culture.

Classroom Meetings, weekly Community Circles and School Assemblies involve the following:

- Classroom meetings focusing on developing the Five Social Competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships skills and responsible decision making all focusing on strategies and techniques for students to use when dealing with stress and inappropriate conduct and work issues.
- Community Circles focus on developing student voice.
- The process of monitoring student behaviours and reviewing school wide expectations is one that involves all staff at team level meetings and individual teacher conversations.

### **5. Alignment**

Administration from our community of schools (elementary, middle and secondary) met to compare our respective codes of conduct and school-wide discipline systems. Although it is recognized that there is a need for some school-wide autonomy, schools are attempting to strive for continuity in terms of language used with students regarding safety and belonging. A strong degree of alignment in core values is evident among schools in the community.

École Montgomery Middle School's Code of Conduct is aligned with our school district Code of Conduct policy (Policy 17)

### **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

Our École Montgomery 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 non-violence, 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 Free Environment – AP 171**

The Board declares that all buildings under its jurisdiction and all school grounds shall be designated “tobacco free”. This “no smoking” policy shall be followed by students, staff, parents and visitors at all times.

#### **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.

## **6. School Standards**

École Montgomery 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.

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

- To establish and maintain a safe, caring and orderly environments for purposeful learning.
- To establish and maintain appropriate balances among individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities.
- To clarify expectations for behaviour while at school, on the way to and from school, and while attending school functions or activities at any location.
- To assist children in developing socially responsible behaviours, showing a developing awareness of their role as ethical decision-makers and moral citizens.

**b) Conduct Expectations:**

**Acceptable Conduct**

At Monty, our high expectations for behaviour are expressed through our slogan, "Monty R.O.C.K.S." It stands for:

- R – Respect**
- O – Organization**
- C – Cooperation**
- K – Kindness**
- S – Safety**

We recognize the importance in modeling respectful, responsible and clear processes for managing conflict. Whenever possible we try to use a restorative approach to resolving conflict and teach pro- social behaviors.

**Restorative Practices:**

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 wrongdoer recognize and repair any harm done. Furthermore, the purpose is to teach the wrongdoer moving forward, and then reinforce positive behaviors, in order to return the wrongdoer to the school community stronger, and more resilient than before the harm was done.

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 those harmed, wrongdoer and communities.
2. Restorative Practices addresses obligations of the wrongdoer resulting from those harms, as well as the community's obligations to both victims and offenders.
3. Restorative Practices uses inclusive, collaborative processes.
4. Restorative Practices involves all individuals (victims, wrongdoer, parents, students, staff, and faculty) who have a legitimate stake in a given situation.
5. Restorative Practices seeks to put right the wrongs that have been done, so that victim(s) feel safe and valued, and wrongdoer feels restored to the school community

At Montgomery students are expected to:

- *Follow Section 7 and 8 of Human Rights Code of British Columbia, as listed above in our Alignment Section*
- Understand and respect the rights of everyone in our community,
  - Including the right to learn and the right of teachers to facilitate learning
  - Treat all students, staff members and visitors with respect
  - Respect the surrounding community and take pride in their school
- Act in a safe, caring and responsible manner, respecting personal space and property
  - Monty is a closed campus, students are to remain on property once they arrive until 3pm unless picked up by their parent/guardian
  - Walk when inside the building
  - Students are to keep their hands and feet to themselves at all times
  - Use responsible problem solving, use your words, walk away, ask for help
- Engage in purposeful learning activities in a productive manner
- Follow the annual Classroom/ School Charters for all community members;
- Follow acceptable Technology guidelines and use computers, and all other electronic devices appropriately and respectfully as instructed by the classroom teacher.
  - Photos and videos taken by students require the permission of a teacher
  - Cell phones/ iPods are to be stored in lockers between 8:45am-3pm unless used under the supervision of a teacher and for an educational or medical reason (technology for learning). Phones will be collected if in use and handed in at the office until 3pm

### Unacceptable Conduct

(Behaviours listed as unacceptable are examples only and do not represent an all-inclusive list.)

Behaviours that:

- Interfere with the learning of others
- Interfere with an orderly and calm environment
- Create unsafe conditions

Acts of:

- Bullying, harassment, intimidation (*Bullying includes, but is not limited to, physical or verbal intimidation, verbal harassment and cyber bullying, occurring on or off school property. District Policy 17*)
- Rough play or physical violence
- Retribution against others
- Recording and/ or posting to social media other students engaged in illegal or violent acts or actions that break the school code of conduct.

Illegal acts, such as:

- **Possession**, use, or distribution of illegal or restricted substances – cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, vape products, alcohol, drugs
- Possession and use of weapons, replica weapons or items used as potential weapons
- Theft or damage to property

Students may be subject to discipline under the school and/or District Code of Conduct for any conduct, including the use of technology, 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.

A search by school officials of a Montgomery student or their 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. We believe that all children can learn socially responsible behaviors.



**c) Consequences:**

- Consequences of not meeting behavioural expectations are based on what is best for the student. How can we best help him/her 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.

**RAP Protocol** – a written response for students to formalize the ownership of their wrongful actions and to initiate brainstorming of more respectful choices that are available for student problem solving. Responses are kept in an incident referral book for the duration of a student's time at Montgomery.

- a. **Responsibility** – for offending actions
- b. **Actions** – what actions will be undertaken to set thing right for pain, suffering or damage done
- c. **Plan and Promise**- commitment to not engage in further disrespectful activities  
All signed and dated by the student and parent/guardian

Conference Resolution Process – a collaborative discussion process that engages conflicting parties and witnesses to the event. In the conference/ circles, 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](http://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:

- Own and /fix problem
- Discussion with teacher/discussion with administrator
- Written letter to victim or those affected
- Restorative Circle
- School/community service outside of class time
- Parent phone call/ parent meeting/ student timeout with parent guardian
- Loss of noon hour/nutrition break
- Informal in school suspension (time out of class)

- Alternate to suspension (YMCA) 1-5 days at another middle school
- Formal In-school or 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 school environment. 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. Families can call, speak in person or email to share information.

**d) Notification:**

It is our desire to work with parents to help students make good choices and respect the rights of all members of our school community. Teachers and Administrators will phone home for many reasons, with both "Good News" and school concerns. Parents will often be asked to be involved in helping shape productive behaviour. The decision to notify parents will be made by school staff.

There will definitely be contact with home if any of the following occurs:

- If a student is absent or missing with no parent contact.
- If a student is involved in behaviour which is chronically unkind, interferes with the learning of others, is disrespectful or unsafe.
- If a student is frightened, intimidated, injured, upset in any significant way.

For serious breaches of the code of conduct the following people will receive notification:

- Parents of the student offender(s) and victim(s)
- School district officials (for formal suspensions) – as required by school district policy
- Police and/or other agencies – as required by law
- School staff & school community as deemed appropriate by the school and/or district administration. This would be to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are addressing it.

**e) Respectful School Clothing:**

Montgomery Middle School is a community of learning 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 refrain from wearing clothing and jewelry that:

- advertise drug paraphernalia, drugs, liquor, or inappropriate items;
- displays words or pictures that are derogatory, insulting, racist, sexist, threatening, violent or homophobic
- Hoods/hoodies are not to be worn covering the head within the building. This promotes face to face communication and identification. (Hats are permitted at teacher discretion)

Students should wear clothing that is respectful in terms of body image and visibility. Students whose clothing choices result in bodies being too visible for a school setting (e.g. exposed buttocks, midriff, pectorals, and breasts), will be asked to put on different clothing. Respect for the learning environment is the guideline.