

# Syuwenct Code of Conduct

## Purpose

At syuwénct Elementary School, we are committed to fostering a **safe, caring, inclusive, and welcoming environment** that upholds the rights and responsibilities of everyone in our community. This environment supports each child in reaching their potential, experiencing growth, becoming a contributing citizen, and embracing lifelong learning.

## Purpose of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct serves to:

- Establish and maintain a safe, caring, inclusive, and welcoming environment.
- Clarify and publish expectations for student behavior at school, traveling to and from school, and during school-related activities.
- Balance individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities appropriately.
- Promote the values of the **BC Human Rights Code**, respecting the rights of all individuals.
- Outline how staff adopt educative, preventative, and restorative approaches in response to behavior.

## Guiding Policies and Principles

The **Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) 2.10 Inclusion Policy** emphasizes respect, acceptance, safety, and equity, affirming that:

*"A learning environment that reflects diversity, inclusivity, and equity is essential in supporting the highest level of individual growth and achievement."*

The **BC Human Rights Code** aligns with these principles, highlighting key objectives to:

- Foster a society in which all individuals can fully and freely participate in economic, social, political, and cultural life.
- Promote mutual respect and understanding, ensuring equality in dignity and rights.
- Provide redress for individuals or groups discriminated against based on factors such as race, color, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital or family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.

The **Safe, Caring, and Orderly Schools Guide** states that schools should be environments where:

- Students are free from harm.
- Clear expectations of acceptable behavior are established and upheld.
- All members feel a sense of belonging.

The NLPS Inclusion Policy reinforces that all school community members:

*"Have the right to expect that policies, procedures, programs, and communications are inclusive and respectful."*

## Supporting Administrative Procedures

The following Administrative Procedures (APs) guide and support the Code of Conduct:

- **AP 312:** Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Discrimination
- **AP 344:** Code of Conduct
- **AP 345:** Student Suspension
- **AP 347:** Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- **AP 350:** Honoring Diversity and Challenging Racism

## Code Expectations

At syuwén'ct Elementary School, students are expected to demonstrate socially responsible behaviors that reflect **respect** and **safety**, both on school grounds and at any school-related events or functions, regardless of location.

## Acceptable Conduct

Acceptable conduct includes socially responsible behaviors that contribute to a **safe, caring, and inclusive environment**, such as:

- Contributing positively to the school community.
- Solving problems in peaceful and constructive ways.
- Valuing and embracing diversity.
- Defending human rights.
- Engaging in respectful interactions with students, staff, and community members.
- Speaking up and reporting behaviors that demean others or threaten personal or emotional safety.
- Respecting the law and encouraging others to do the same.

## Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable conduct involves behaviors that disrupt the safety and orderliness of the school environment, whether in person or via social media, including but not limited to:

- Harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination.
- Interfering with learning or the orderly conduct of school functions.
- Verbal threats of harm or acts such as swarming.
- Engaging in illegal activities, including:
  - Theft or property damage.
  - Possession or distribution of illegal or restricted substances.
  - Possession, use, or distribution of a weapon.
  - Physical violence.

## Considerations for Students with Diverse Needs

According to **AP 344 - Code of Conduct**, students with diverse needs may face unique challenges that prevent them from fully complying with the Code of Conduct. These students may require **special considerations** and **appropriate interventions** to ensure they are not subjected to disciplinary actions as a direct or indirect result of their disability.

We are committed to fostering an environment where all students feel safe, respected, and supported, recognizing and addressing the diverse needs of our learners.

## Rising Expectations:

At syuwén'ct Elementary School, staff utilize the **BC Performance Standards for Social Responsibility** to guide students in developing appropriate social behaviors. These standards provide a clear progression of expectations as students grow older, mature, and advance through the grades.

Our approach is:

- **Educative:** Teaching social skills explicitly and systematically.
- **Preventative:** Establishing proactive strategies to support positive behaviors.
- **Reinforcing:** Offering repeated opportunities to practice and apply social skills in diverse contexts.

We incorporate a variety of frameworks to support social learning, including:

- **BC Performance Standards for Social Responsibility/Core Competencies:** Focusing on personal and social awareness and responsibility.
- **Successful Learner Traits:** Encouraging qualities such as perseverance, empathy, and collaboration.
- **First Peoples Principles of Learning:** Emphasizing interconnectedness, respect, and a sense of community.

This multifaceted approach ensures that students are provided with meaningful opportunities to learn, practice, and embody social responsibility throughout their time at syuwén'ct Elementary.

## Restorative Practices

The **NLPS Inclusion Policy** emphasizes that:

*“The Board expects that all students, staff, and members of our school communities will adhere to a code of conduct that is educative, preventative, and restorative in practice and response.”*

## Restorative Practices

Restorative practices at syuwén'ct Elementary focus on creating opportunities for students to learn self-discipline, repair relationships, and return to the group or community in a strengthened and positive way. These practices include:

- **Addressing the needs of those who have been harmed**, ensuring their voices are heard and their concerns are acknowledged.
- **Encouraging students to participate in the development of meaningful interventions**, often through discussion or mediation, to replace, repair, or make amends for any harm caused.
- **Responding to harm in ways that are meaningful**, addressing the needs of all involved and promoting understanding and resolution.
- **Helping students reclaim their self-esteem** through self-evaluation, personal effort, and restitution.
- **Providing opportunities to model leadership** and responsibility.
- **Emphasizing the importance of positive relationships** in building a sense of community.
- **Speaking to our shared obligation** to support one another as we work toward wholeness, restoration, and a sense of belonging.

## Participating in Meaningful Consequences

Restorative practices may involve various consequences aimed at repairing harm and restoring balance. These may include:

- Offering a **“do over”** opportunity to correct behavior.
- Holding **face-to-face meetings** to directly address and acknowledge the harm caused.
- Organizing **group or classroom circles** to restore equity, respect, and balance.
- Engaging in an **act of service** to positively contribute to the class, school, or community.
- Accessing **school/community support** to learn and practice problem-solving or conflict-resolution strategies.
- Completing a **reflective process** that includes creating a plan to restore the harm done and prevent future incidents.

Restorative practices are integral to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, where students can grow, learn from their mistakes, and strengthen their relationships with others.

## Student Suspension

Disciplinary measures used with students should be viewed as part of the process of fostering both **intellectual** and **social development**. The purpose of suspension, or any other disciplinary strategy, is to support students in reaching **provincial goals** and ultimately to develop into **self-reliant adults**.

### Suspension

Suspension is one strategy within a broader, more complex **problem-solving process** aimed at supporting students in changing inappropriate behaviors. When used judiciously, suspension can have positive effects, such as:

- **Ensuring the safety** of everyone in the school community.
- Assigning **clear consequences** for serious breaches of the code of conduct.
- Providing **time to plan** for support and behavior change.
- Promoting **collaboration** between the family, school, and other community services to address and resolve problems.

### Equitable Consequences

To ensure fairness, consequences for misconduct may vary from student to student, even if the behavior is similar. Interventions must be **age-appropriate**, and take into account the student's **maturity, needs, exceptionalities, extenuating circumstances**, and the **nature of previous interventions**. The needs of the school community must also be considered. (Refer to **AP 344 - Student Suspension**)

At syuwén'ct Elementary, we strive to ensure that discipline is approached in a way that supports both individual growth and the well-being of our entire school community.

## Reporting Serious Breaches of the Code of Conduct

School administration may advise external parties or agencies of serious breaches of the **Code of Conduct**, depending on the **severity** and/or **frequency** of the misconduct, and the **impact** on others or the broader school community.

For **illegal acts**, the school will report the incident to the **RCMP** and/or **District Administration**. In such cases, a **safety plan** will be developed, which will include a combination of:

- **Educational** components,
- **Preventive** measures, and
- **Restorative** actions to address the harm caused and promote positive behavior moving forward.

These steps are part of our commitment to maintaining a safe, supportive, and respectful school environment for all students.

### **Prohibition of Reprisal or Retaliation**

No student, school employee, parent, or volunteer may engage in **reprisal** or **retaliation** against a victim, witness, or any individual who comes forward with information about an incident of **harassment, intimidation, bullying, prejudice, or discrimination**.

Such behavior is strictly prohibited and, where appropriate, will result in **disciplinary action** and/or the filing of a **complaint with relevant authorities**. This policy is in place to ensure that everyone feels safe and supported when reporting incidents, and to maintain a respectful and inclusive school environment.

### **Right to Appeal and Address Concerns**

The **Board of Education** recognizes and respects that students and/or parents or guardians may, at times, disagree with decisions made by school employees. The **School Act of British Columbia** provides students (with parental consent) and parents or guardians the right to express concerns or appeal certain decisions, specifically those that significantly affect the **health, education, or welfare** of students.

For information regarding the Board's appeal procedure, including a copy of the formal appeal bylaw, please visit: [sd68.bc.ca / Board Policies / 1000 Board Governance / 4.0 Bylaws](https://sd68.bc.ca/BoardPolicies/1000BoardGovernance/4.0Bylaws).

Before initiating an appeal, it is expected that school administration, students, and parents or guardians will make reasonable efforts to resolve concerns at the school level.