

OKANAGAN MISSION SECONDARY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Statement of Purpose

Okanagan Mission Secondary School takes pride in providing a high quality education program within a safe and caring environment. This code exists to accomplish the following:

- Provide a foundation for the development and maintenance of a safe, caring and orderly environment for school members;
- Strike an appropriate balance among individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities; and
- Outline and clarify expectations for students while at school, going to and from school, and at any school function or activity at any location.

OKM 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, family status, physical or mental disability, gender, gender identity and expression or sexual orientation – in its school environment. **Rationale, Rights and Responsibilities** Students have the **right** to learn. Students have the **responsibility** to attend regularly, be on time and prepared to achieve, listen to instruction, work quietly when expected to do so, and complete assignments. Students are responsible for texts, resources, and library books. Students have the **right** to hear and be heard. Students have the **responsibility** to be good listeners, not to interrupt when others are speaking. Good listeners do the following:

- face the speaker
- maintain eye contact
- focus their attention on the speaker

Students have the **right** to be respected in this school.

Students have the **responsibility** to respect others in all aspects of language, dress & behaviour.

Students have the **right** to be safe in this school.

Students have the **responsibility** not to verbally threaten, harass, bully or physically harm anyone in this school

Students have the **right** to privacy and personal space.

Students have the **responsibility** to respect the personal property of others and accept their right to privacy.

Students have the **right** to have input into school policies through appropriate processes.

Students have the **responsibility** to adhere to school policy.

Every student of school age has the **right** to an education that enables him/her to become personally fulfilled and publicly useful.

Every student of school age has the **responsibility** to comply with the school rules and with the Code of Conduct, and to participate in the educational program provided by the school. As students mature it is expected that there will be an increase in personal responsibility and self-discipline. This Code of Conduct applies to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place has an effect on maintaining safety and order in the schools.

Conduct Expectations

All school members will demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and their school by doing the following:

- Treating school property and the property of others with a reasonable standard of care
- Expressing themselves with socially acceptable language and gestures
- Exhibiting behaviour that is free of all forms of intimidation, harassment, racism, and discrimination
- Dressing in accordance with the school dress standards
- Promoting positive behaviour through the avoidance of all types of violent acts
- Informing a school official of any unsafe situation (individual or behaviour)
- Making every effort to attend scheduled classes and arrive on time
- Respecting the rights of others to learn in an environment free of unnecessary distracters
- Refraining from the possession of any form of a weapon while on school property
- Refraining from the possession and use of all forms of intoxicants
- Assisting in making the school a safe, caring and orderly place, and
- Modelling respectful and responsible behaviour not only at school, but within the community, and acting as a school ambassador

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

Principal Authority

The principal has a right under the School Act to discharge discipline from the time a student leaves home to go to school until such time as the student returns home at the conclusion of the school day. However, the principal's and the district's authority also extend beyond the normal 'home-to-home' rule when the behaviour of a student off school premises or after school hours adversely affects the operation of a school.

Examples of Unacceptable Conduct

While this is not an all-inclusive list, examples of unacceptable conduct include the following

- behaviours that:
 - interfere with the rights of others to learn (ex. getting into a power struggle with a school member)
 - create an unsafe situation for any school member (ex. not complying with safety procedures when working with equipment)
 - distract others from focusing on instruction or concentrating on prescribed tasks (ex. failing to apply themselves or having a cell phone ring in the middle of a class)
 - disrespect or defy a staff member (ex. refusing to change seats, clean up or go to the office)
- acts of:
 - bullying, harassment or intimidation (ex. directing intimidating behaviours toward another school member or systematically excluding an individual from a group activity)
 - physical violence (ex. fighting or encouraging other school members to fight)
 - retribution against a person who has reported a concern (ex. threatening to hurt students because they sought help from a staff member)
- illegal acts, such as:
 - possession, use, or distribution of illegal or restricted substances (ex. being in possession or under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at school or associating with an individual who is using a controlled substance)
 - possession or use of weapons (ex. having a knife at school or threatening a school member with a tool)
 - theft or damage to property (ex. tagging the walls in a school bathroom or destroying a school member's personal possession)

Rising expectations

It is understood that students require assistance in developing and subscribing to these socially responsible values and behaviours. One role of school staff is to educate and guide student social development by increasing expectations and consequences as students mature both physically and socially. As a result, responses to behaviour will vary according to these variables. Generally, as a student matures, expectations will increase and consequences will be adjusted accordingly.

Consequences

We believe that discipline is intended to promote the development of pro-social behaviours. To this end, it is partially our responsibility to actively teach these attitudes and skills. In this process, it will be necessary to draw on consequences to enhance student learning. The use of consequences will be governed by the following principles:

- Consequences will be appropriate to the student's stage of development
- Consequences will reflect the intensity, frequency and/or duration of the inappropriate behaviour
- Consequences will be chosen primarily for their educational value
- Consequences will make sense to the student as much as possible, and
- Consequences will be appropriately timed

In addition, **special considerations may apply to students with special needs**, if they are unable to comply with this code due to having a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature.

Although this is not an all-inclusive list, the following are some examples of consequences that may be considered:

- Informal meeting with a student to address the situation
- Phone call to parent to discuss the situation
- Mandatory detention or tutorial time assigned
- Formal meeting involving student and guardian
- Removal of an assumed school privilege
- Referral to Vice Principal
- Withdrawal from course
- Restitution, either monetary or through school-based community service
- Referral to School-based Resource Team
- Definite in-school or out-of-school suspension
- Indefinite suspension

Notification

In instances where a student, or group of students, engages in a serious breach of the code of conduct, it may be necessary for school officials to advise other parties. Specifically, we will adhere to the following guidelines in notification:

- parents of student offender(s) – in every instance
- parents of student victim(s) – in every instance
- school district officials – as required by school district policy
- police and/or other agencies – as required by law
- all parents – when deemed to be important to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate action to address the matter

In addition to the above, we have a responsibility to the district and the Ministry of Education to track and generically report data collected on student misbehaviour patterns. This information is used to determine trends, re-tool responses, and determine changes to existing policies and practices.

School District Expectations Regarding Student Behaviour

Every student shall be subject to the School Code of Conduct while on school premises, in going to and returning from school, and at all functions and athletic events under the school's jurisdiction, whenever and wherever held.

Suspension

A "suspension" is, by definition, a removal of a student's privilege to attend regular class instruction sessions. Suspension may be either definite (up to ten school days) or indefinite (in excess of ten school days).

Administrators of schools, and teachers authorized by the board and the principal, may suspend a student when the Administrator or other authorized teacher concludes the following:

- A student is willfully disobedient to a teacher or any other employee of the board carrying out responsibilities approved by the board
- The behaviour of the student has a harmful effect on the character or persons of other students or staff members
- A student fails to apply himself in his studies or fails to comply with the rules of the school and does not, after due warning, make a reasonable effort to reform

If you have any questions about this code and related applications, contact the school administration.