



EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Background

The Board of Education of qathet School District No. 47 (qSD) is committed to providing an environment that supports its core values of integrity, respect, courage, curiosity, inclusivity and good relations throughout the community. The Employee Standards of Conduct are designed to cultivate our individual and collective accountability and serve to advance the vision of “Creating Brighter Tomorrows for All.”

Expectations for Staff

The Standards of Conduct outlined in this Administrative Procedure are intended to provide guidance on the behaviours that support qSD values. All employees of qSD have the responsibility to understand and conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set out in this document as it is critical to building and maintaining the trust of the qSD community. There may be consequences including disciplinary actions for failure to comply with these Standards of Conduct. Employees with questions concerning any aspect of this Procedure are encouraged to discuss the matter with their Principal, Manager and/or direct Supervisor.

Employees who become aware of a breach of these standards must report the matter to their Principal, Manager, direct Supervisor or a representative of the Human Resources Department. qSD will use all reasonable efforts to protect the identity of employees who report their concerns under these Standards, except where disclosure is necessary to ensure a full and fair investigation or is otherwise required by law.

1. Professional Conduct: qSD recognizes the right of all employees to work in a safe and healthy environment, free from bullying, discrimination, and harassment. It is expected that all employees are professional and respectful in all their interactions with students, parents, co-workers, employees, contractors, and the general community. Employees are expected to conduct their employment responsibilities in an honest, trustworthy, impartial, diligent, and non-offensive manner. Employees shall adhere to the policies, practices, and procedures of the District, in addition to their governing codes of professional conduct i.e. the Professional Standards for BC Educators, the BCTF Code of Ethics and the CUPE and qTA Collective Agreements.

Bullying, harassment, discriminatory conduct and violence in the workplace are serious employment offences. Employees must not make comments or engage in conduct which they

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know or ought to know is intimidating, humiliating, hostile, offensive, discriminatory, or violent. Everyone is responsible for upholding the Board's responsibilities under the *Human Rights Code*. Employees must refrain from any comments or behaviours which are known or ought to be known to discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, colour, family status, gender identity or expression, Indigenous identity, marital status, mental or physical disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or source of income. Allegations of bullying, discrimination and harassment will be dealt with in accordance with the language in the Collective Agreements and existing District Policy.

See **Administrative Procedure 409: Harassment and Bullying – Staff** for additional information.

2. **Inclusion:** Inclusion in qSD is based on the principles of respect, acceptance, safety, and equity. It is the recognition and honoring of diversity and valuing the contributions of all members of our school communities.

The Board of Education of the qathet School District recognizes that visible and invisible diversities exist and therefore is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all who learn and work in qSD. The Board affirms that a learning environment that reflects diversity, inclusivity, and equity is essential in supporting the highest levels of individual growth and achievement.

See **Administrative Procedure 401: Employment Equity and Diversity in the Workplace** for additional information.

3. **Relationships with Students:** Employees are role models and need to exhibit the highest qualities of character, including honesty, integrity, trustworthiness and compassion. Employees must respect and maintain appropriate boundaries between themselves and students, always acting in a manner consistent with their obligations under these Standards and any applicable professional code of conduct. Employees must never abuse the privileged position of authority, trust and influence they hold with students.

See **Administrative Procedure 420: Code of Professional Relationships** for additional information.

4. **Smoke-Free Environment:** The Board of Education believes that a smoke-free environment is essential for its students and employees. Parents, students, staff and visitors cannot smoke, hold lit tobacco or cannabis, use chewing tobacco or electronic delivery systems (vaping) anywhere on property owned or operated by qSD at any time whether or not school is in session. There may be exceptions related to traditional, cultural or Indigenous activities.

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See **Administrative Procedure 162: Smoking in District Facilities and on District Grounds** and **Administrative Procedure 162 Appendix: Smudging / Pipe Ceremonies** for additional information.

5. Drug, Alcohol and Substance Use:

5.1 The qSD prohibits:

- 5.1.1 The use or consumption of alcohol, drugs or medication, including cannabis, that may have an impairing effect at any time when an employee is at work, during lunch or other breaks, on or off qSD premises;
- 5.1.2 The use or consumption of alcohol, drugs or medication, including cannabis during lunch or other breaks as it undermines parent and community confidence or compromises the reputation of qSD, and;
- 5.1.3 The possession, distribution, offering for sale or sale of, alcohol, drugs, or medication, including cannabis, that may have an impairing effect, at any time when an employee is at work on or off qSD premises.

5.2 Employees are responsible for their use or consumption of alcohol, drugs, and medication preceding work and must allow sufficient time for the impairing effects of those substances to have fully resolved prior to the employee's scheduled work time.

5.3 If an employee believes that a worker is impaired by alcohol, drugs, or medication, or observes what appears to be an unsafe or harmful condition or act, the employee must take reasonable action to prevent that worker from working and report it to their Principal, Manager, direct Supervisor or a representative of the Human Resources Department immediately.

5.4 When attending or hosting qSD sponsored events or events on qSD property after an employee's regular hours of work, staff are expected to model responsible and safe behaviour which does not adversely impact the reputation or operation of qSD. Cannabis and alcohol cannot be consumed on qSD property unless a license is obtained. This includes but is not limited to compliance with Section 253 of the Criminal Code of Canada, the Motor Vehicle Act of BC (impaired driving laws) as well as the BC Liquor Control and Licensing Act and the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation.

5.5 Substance Use Disorders:



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- 5.5.1 qSD understands that certain individuals may develop an addiction or substance use disorder related to their use or consumption of drugs, alcohol, or medication, and recognizes its duty to accommodate employees with disabilities, including substance use disorders, to the point of undue hardship.
- 5.5.2 Employees with addictions or substance use disorders are encouraged to obtain treatment before their use of drugs, alcohol, or medication affects the safety of their work. Where an employee has or suspects they may have an addiction or substance use disorder, they are strongly encouraged to notify the Director of Human Resources.
- 5.5.3 qSD will work with the employee to determine what, if any, accommodation can reasonably be provided to that individual. No employee who discloses a substance use disorder will be disciplined solely because of the disclosure or their involvement in a rehabilitation effort. This does not prevent qSD from taking corrective action where the employee's substance use has already resulted in the unsafe performance of work prior to disclosure.

See **Administrative Procedure 408: Substance Abuse** for additional information.

- 6. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy: In the course of employment or while performing their duties, qSD staff may be given access to or become aware of confidential or proprietary information of the School District. Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, employees working with confidential information and systems, must always follow relevant qSD protocols and take appropriate safeguards to ensure it is stored securely and protected against unauthorized access. Employees are prohibited from discussing students' personal information with their families and friends and must not discuss a student's personal information with a co-worker, unless disclosure is necessary for the co-worker's performance of their duties. If an employee is aware of any inappropriate disclosure of confidential or sensitive information, it is their responsibility to notify their Principal, Manager, and/or direct Supervisor or the Executive Director of Communications, Privacy & Community Engagements.

See **Administrative Procedure 180: Freedom of Information** for additional information.

- 7. Social Media: qathet School District welcomes the responsible use of social media technologies and other forms of electronic communication to support learning and for School District business and communication purposes. However, social media usage must be undertaken in a manner that is respectful, privacy compliant and consistent with the role of School District staff within the community.

See **Administrative Procedure 146: Use of Social Media** for additional information.



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8. Appropriate Use of District Property: Employees are responsible for exercising all reasonable care to prevent abuse to excessive wear, loss or damage to qSD owned equipment or materials entrusted to their care.
 - 8.1 Board assets, whether in physical or intangible form, are intended to help employees achieve business goals. Board assets are primarily to be used for legitimate business purposes. Employees may occasionally use company resources such as a photocopier machine, telephone or e-mail for personal use if there are no measurable increased costs, and other employees or students are not distracted or inconvenienced by the use of those resources. Employee usage of qSD resources must be authorized by the site Principal, Manager, and/or direct Supervisor.
9. Off-Duty Conduct: qSD respects employee privacy and personal autonomy in activities outside of work, however, an employee's actions at work and in their personal life have the potential to negatively affect qSD operations, reputation and work environment and employees are accountable for those actions. Employees must not engage in off-duty activities which place them in a conflict of interest whether actual or perceived or which negatively affect qSD operations, reputation and work environment. Social media and online posts and discussions are governed by this section.
10. Criminal Conduct and Compliance with the Law: Employees must immediately notify the Superintendent if they are charged with a criminal offence which may be relevant to their employment, including but not limited to, a relevant or specified offence under the *Criminal Records Review Act*. Employees who are not sure whether to disclose a particular charge should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the Human Resources Department. Employees must fully comply at all times with all laws applicable to their job. Employees must never commit or condone an illegal act or counsel another employee to break the law. If an employee is aware of an action or practice which they think may be in violation of the law, they must raise this concern with a responsible Principal, Manager, and/or direct Supervisor without delay.

See **Administrative Procedure 400 - Appendix A: Criminal Records Search** for additional information.
11. Professional Qualifications: Employees must hold and retain any qualifications and licenses required by the job description and profession. This includes keeping required qualifications and licenses current and valid.
 - 11.1 Employees who are members of a recognized profession required for the position and supported by qSD, are expected to:
 - 11.1.1 Keep abreast of professional developments in the relevant field.



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- 11.1.2 Perform their duties in accordance with the recognized standards of that profession.
 - 11.1.3 Abide by any code or standards of conduct adopted by the relevant professional association.
 - 11.2 If an employee's professional obligations or standards are in conflict with these Standards of Conduct or with qSD directions to the employee, the employee must promptly notify and seek guidance from their Principal, Manager and/or direct Supervisor.
12. Conflict of Interest: The employees of qathet School District occupy positions of great public trust and confidence. They are expected to discharge their duties and responsibilities professionally, efficiently and impartially. The onus is on each employee to anticipate and to avoid conflicts of interest. It is imperative that employees always be seen as acting in the best interests of the public they serve, and do not compromise themselves in the discharge of their duties.

An employee is expected to disclose a potential Conflict of Interest to their Superintendent before engaging in any activity that might reasonably raise questions regarding a conflict of interest.

*Employees seeking further information should consult **Administrative Procedure 404 Employee Conflict of Interest.***

Reference: Sections 20, 22, 85 *School Act*
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Criminal Records Review Act

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