

January 20, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Re: Community Youth Activities “Grad Pranks”

We share the pride of accomplishment and look forward to joining you in congratulating the class of 2020. However, in past years there have been troubling incidents of unsafe behaviour and acts of vandalism involving youth in our neighbourhoods participating in reckless events, often characterized as grad activities. Such events are a trend, not just in our school district but in other communities as well. We are asking for your help in ensuring your son or daughter is aware that unsafe and unacceptable behaviours can have serious consequences.

It is important that we work together to ensure that our young people do not take part in, condone, provoke, encourage, or support:

- *bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, threat(s) or intimidation*
- *violence of any form*
- *verbal, physical or sexual abuse*
- *discrimination in any form*
- *theft*
- *unsafe or dangerous activities*
- *vandalism*
- *possession or use of intoxicating or banned substances*
- *possession or use of weapons (or replica weapons) and explosives*

Youth involved in these types of activities may face criminal and school consequences, including losing the privilege to attend extra-curricular events such as the grad ceremony and banquet. Students may also face suspension from school and/or criminal charges. Given that positive citizenship is often considered in selection for school and district scholarships, poor decisions can also impact those award possibilities. Parents are also financially responsible for damage caused by their children – please see the attached School Act excerpt. We ask that you understand the school’s and district’s position in taking the necessary disciplinary steps in circumstances where inappropriate behaviour occurs.

We also fully support your decision to not permit your son or daughter to attend unsupervised events. We often hear about camping trips, parties or trips to vacation spots like Whistler which are not organized by the district, parents or the school. Our shared goal of safety for all of our young people is compromised when these events occur. Please contact the school administration if you are uncertain about the status of an event. We would be happy to clarify if this is an event supported by the school or the district. Each year in B.C. there are tragic events associated with “grad activities” that could be avoided through increased awareness and clear expectations.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



Jordan Tinney
Superintendent of Schools/CEO



Brian Edwards
Assistant Commissioner, Officer in Charge
Surrey Detachment

LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING



SCHOOL ACT
BC Ministry of Education
Governance and Legislation Branch C-1 April 16, 2009
REVISED STATUTES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1996

Division 3 - Joint Rights and Duties
Liability for damage to property

10 If property of a board or a francophone education authority is destroyed, damaged, lost or converted by the intentional or negligent act of a student or a francophone student, that student and that student's parents are jointly and severally liable to the board or francophone education authority in respect of the act of that student.

[1997-52-4 effective Aug. 1/97, BC Reg. 287/97]

LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING

Surrey Schools – Superintendent's Department 14033 92nd Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V3V 0B7
Tel: (604) 595-6308 Fax: (604) 595-6309 www.surreyschools.ca