

Coast Tsimshian Academy

Parent & Student
Handbook

See Notes

Coast Tsimshian Academy operates under a body of carefully worded rules and regulations approved by the School Board. When necessary, parents can and should ask for particulars of the policies involved in meeting any needs of students. This handbook presents a shortened version of policies for every day reference.

Coast Tsimshian Academy is committed to providing students with an excellent education. The Academy is committed to providing a safe school with conditions in the classroom that allow students to learn and do their best work. When we accomplish this, the young people of our community have the best possible chance to acquire a solid foundation of learning. They can build on this to become happy and responsible citizens. In meeting the educational needs of students, Coast Tsimshian Academy acts on behalf of parents and caregivers and the community of Lax Kw'alaams.

Students and staff are equal in standing as human beings with inalienable rights, but very different in some of their responsibilities. School staff must treat students with respect and dignity; they must model the behaviors that they hope to teach to students. Administrators, teachers and all staff share responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. It is the responsibility of school staff to act on the knowledge that our jobs are centered upon service to students on behalf of the Lax Kw'alaams community.

Students should:

Come to school ready to learn. With this in mind, students should:

- **make sure they get enough sleep to be able to think clearly.**
- **eat breakfast in the morning either at home or at the school cafeteria.**
- **practice good personal hygiene. For example; shower or bathe and brush their teeth daily.**

Show respect for themselves, other students and school staff. This includes but is not limited to; proper language and conduct that does not interfere with someone else's right to the best possible education.

Leave items that are not part of their daily school routine at home. The school cannot accept responsibility for loss of or damage to personal effects including electronic devices, jewelry, athletic shoes and equipment.

Follow school rules and realize that it is *their choice alone to follow or not follow the rules and accept possible consequences.*

Wear clothes that do not offend other people and preserve reasonable standards of modesty.

An important note: the history of education in First Nations communities has bequeathed lessons that must be respected and remembered. Coast Tsimshian Academy is mindful of this and will not purposely assume the role of parent/caregiver for any student. In the event of negative student

choices that are unresponsive to intervention and threaten the safety or the right to education of other students, the school will act based upon the knowledge that it is the inalienable right of Parents/Caregivers to make important decisions regarding the remediation of negative student choices. The school may request that the Parents or Caregivers provide care and instruction for the student in question *at home* until such time as the student is able to make responsible and safe choices at school.

Parents should:

Be aware of their child's life at school. Do they have homework? What are they learning? Are they happy at school? Do they feel safe?

Make the school aware of special medical, personal or other needs their child may have.

Talk to the teacher; ask questions about how their child is doing and exercise the right of Parents/Caregivers to be well-informed about their student's education.

Be an integral part of remedial response(s) if a child is having challenges at school.

Make sure that their children are well-rested, have attended to daily hygiene and eat breakfast either at school in the cafeteria or before coming to school.

Make sure that their children are on time for school: try to phone right away if they are going to be late or absent.

Behavioral Responsibilities

Every student deserves the chance to succeed: to receive an education in a safe, respectful and supportive environment. With this in mind, it is fair to say that one student's rights end... where another student's rights begin. For example: students are always encouraged to participate verbally in the educational process but a student who persisted in loudly interrupting a lesson would interfere with the learning of many other students. The interruption would constitute a violation of other students' rights and the interruptions would have to come to an end.

- **Bullying will not be tolerated.**
- **Violence will not be tolerated.**

School discipline policy will be treated as an extension of the School's fiduciary mandate to nurture, educate and safeguard the well-being of students on behalf of parents, caregivers and the Lax Kw'allams community.

Procedures for Parents:

When parents/guardians are concerned with a disciplinary action involving their child, they should follow this procedure:

- a. After hearing the child's report, contact the staff member involved for his or her perspective on the issue.

- b. Be aware that the school has reasons for all the rules and it is important that they be enforced consistently.
- c. Try to resolve the problem as soon as possible at the lowest level of authority: it is important for Parents/Caregivers to **communicate with the Teacher before contacting an Administrator**. Be patient and try not to skip any of these levels when appealing.

Parent/Student Appeals Process

Every parent/guardian is entitled to an appeals process in instances of disciplinary action involving suspension for longer than one week, in cases of expulsion and in the instances of a need to clear a student's record or name of wrongful statements.

The appeals process rights of students and parents are as follows:

- a. Prior to any suspension, the student shall be advised of the misconduct of which he or she is accused and the basis for the accusation.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity at that time to explain their version of the facts.
- c. Written notice of suspension for longer than one week or expulsion shall be given to the parent or guardian of the student.

Parents or Guardians of the suspended student shall have the right of appeal to the superintendent of schools.

Alcohol and Drugs

Students must not be in possession of, under the influence of or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs.

Allergies

Parents should provide the school with **written, accurate information** about a child's allergies. School staff will endeavor to act on the information in a considerate and confidential manner to ensure the student's well-being.

Attendance

Coast Tsimshian Academy recognizes the right of parents to make decisions regarding their children's attendance at school, and we accept our duty to maintain records of student attendance and share that information with parents as needed or requested. All parties concerned must be aware that less than 80% attendance is not compatible with good educational practice and that consistently poor attendance can result in failure to pass a given course. Consistent tardiness or lateness will also compromise a student's chances of passing a given course.

Bicycles

There are known health benefits from riding a bicycle to school. The school however **will not accept responsibility for any bicycles left on school property.** Bicycles should not be parked anywhere close to the doors of the school as this could be a safety hazard to persons exiting the building - especially in the event of an emergency. When bicycles are parked at the school, they should be parked in a vacant space on the racks provided.

Dress Code

Students are not allowed to wear clothing or use materials that:

- a. encourage inappropriate conduct in the classroom.
- b. display references to drugs, alcohol, political statements, cruelty or racism.
- c. display messages that could be interpreted as disrespectful to other people or as infringing upon the rights of others as explained in the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.**
- d. are immodest or display an excessive amount of skin. This policy is directed at fashion trends that
 1. excessively expose areas of the midriff, back, chest or thighs.
 2. promote the exposure of underwear or boxer shorts.

Gym Strip

- a. All students must wear proper footwear during physical activities for health and safety reasons.
- b. Students are encouraged to wear proper gym strip during physical education.

Electronic Devices

Students are only allowed to use mp3 players, cell phones, i-pods or other similar devices in school if given specific permission of the teacher. If a student does use such a device in contravention of rules, the following consequences shall apply:

- a. **First offence:** Student shall be asked to put the device away out of sight.
- b. **Second offence:** Student shall be asked to give the device to the teacher (who will return it at the end of the school day). Failure to comply with Teacher, T.A. or other staff request in this matter can result in more serious consequences.

Bus

The bus driver is responsible for the safe transportation of students and has the responsibility to ensure that student behaviors do not interfere with safety or contravene school rules. Therefore, the following rules must apply:

1. Students must behave on the bus as if they were in school.
2. Students can be assigned seats by the driver.
3. Students must not litter the bus with papers or other garbage.
4. Students must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
5. Students must not extend their head or arms or legs out of the window.
6. Students must not touch the exterior of the bus as it slows to a stop or while it is stopped.
7. ***Students must not engage in Bullying behavior on the bus.***

Failure to comply with these rules can result in

- a. a verbal warning.
- b. a request to leave the bus before the bus continues on its route.
- c. suspension from riding the bus for a fixed amount of time.
- d. suspension from riding the bus for an indefinite period of time.

Field Trips

Coast Tsimshian Academy recognizes the benefits of taking students outside the immediate school environment for a wide variety of educational purposes. Such field trips are a privilege for our students and are not a right. Student behavior and academic issues can impact participation in a given field trip. Each field trip must be planned extensively and the plan submitted for administration approval. Many field trips are financed by fundraising efforts of the classroom(s) involved. This is the reason why parental support is so important. Teachers are not necessarily expected to take the lead in such fundraising efforts.

Homework

Homework is an important aspect of a child's education. Homework usually increases in frequency and volume as students move up in grade. Learning to complete homework in a timely and competent manner also increases in importance with each grade. In addition, homework provides an opportunity for parents to be aware of their child's progress and participate in their child's education in an informal setting. Homework is frequently part of the assessment, evaluative and

reporting process. When a student habitually fails to complete homework assignments and is jeopardizing their own educational progress, parents will be informed

Homework is assigned:

- a. to give extra practice of skills assigned in school.
- b. in order that students may complete work started during the school day.
- c. at the parent or guardian's request.

Smoking

Smoking is known to contribute to a variety of serious illnesses. Smoking is not allowed on school grounds at any time.

Student Injury

Despite sound professional practice and reasonable precaution on the part of school staff, injuries can occur at school. When an injury occurs, school staff will strive to respond appropriately with First Aid. In the case of serious injury, staff will take all steps necessary to insure that students are dealt with by competent medical personnel as soon as possible. Parents or guardians will also be notified as soon as reasonably possible concerning serious injuries.

Student Records

Permanent record cards will be prepared for each Coast Tsimshian Academy student and will be filed in the permanent achieves of the school last attended. Administration and teachers follow the Policy and Practice for Reporting Student Progress as laid out by the BC Ministry of Education. Copies of transcripts, report cards, and similar records of academic progress will be provided to the parent/legal guardian and student with adequate prior notice and upon request (normally written) and will be directed to other institutions of learning when requested. Raw test data, assessment data, and other information that may be sensitive, such as reports of social workers or psychiatrists, should normally be shared only in conferences attended by professional staff. Where written reports are necessary, they will be prepared in summary form and transmitted under confidential cover. Both parents may have access to student records. The school must have a court order to withhold information from a birth parent. Access to students' information will be provided to a

person providing health, social or other support services in accordance with the School Act. This includes the Board's insurer for the purpose of meeting a claim under certain conditions.

Student Reporting

Formal reports to parents/guardians will contain an accurate assessment of academic progress and social and personal development. Teachers will provide in-depth, accurate accounts of student progress. Report cards will normally be issued four (4) times per year. Interim reports on student progress and personal growth will be completed minimally 2 times throughout the school year. Teachers may deliver these interim reports in the form of a letter, face to face conference, or phone call home. The interim reports are designed to inform the family of the student's progress and support communication with the teachers that will address any academic and behavioural concerns prior to the formal report.

Textbooks

All students will be issued the appropriate textbooks. Parents and students are responsible for the proper care of the textbooks. Teachers are expected to keep a record of each textbook issued. Any book lost or damaged, including library books must be paid for by the student or parent/guardian.

Visitors to the School and Premises

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to visit the school whenever they wish to discuss school matters with teachers or the principal. Prior notice is encouraged when an issue is significant and more time may be required to address the challenge(s). Parents/Guardians may visit classrooms during instruction time if they wish. However, if the teacher or the principal feels that a visit is potentially detrimental to the welfare of the student, the class or the school, then the visit may be refused.