



Professional Standards for BC Educators

Effective
June 19, 2019



Belief in the success
of all students is at the centre of the
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
for BC Educators.

The Professional Standards for BC Educators apply to individuals holding a Certificate of Qualification to teach in the BC Kindergarten to Grade 12 public, independent, offshore and First Nations school systems. The Standards also apply to both out-of-province applicants for certification and to teacher candidates enrolled in approved teacher education programs in BC's post-secondary institutions.

Professional Standards guide and advance the work of educators. These Standards communicate the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that define educators' work. They communicate the responsibilities that educators have in fostering public confidence and highlight the complex and varied nature of educators' work. The Standards also reflect that educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation, and healing, acknowledging the history and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada. Through the application of these Standards, educators advocate for student needs and contribute to a safe and inclusive learning environment that reflects the diversity of all students. Educators have a level of autonomy, are accountable for their actions, and must act in the public interest.

The Professional Standards serve both as ideals to which educators aspire and expectations that can be reasonably held. The Standards are also used by the education system as a whole:

- BC teacher education programs employ the Standards to prepare educators.
- The Director of Certification applies the Standards to issue certificates.
- Educators use the Standards to guide their practice and growth.
- The public draws on the Standards to understand the role and work of educators.
- The Commissioner for Teacher Regulation uses the Standards to address possible breaches.

BC educators' practice is governed by the ethics and principles as outlined in the Professional Standards. Through the educators' commitment to these Standards, a high quality education system is maintained, contributing to a democratic society. The actualization of the Professional Standards requires a shared commitment across BC's education system to provide educators with the necessary learning opportunities, resources and supports to ensure the success of students.

MANDATE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' COUNCIL

The *Teachers Act* establishes the British Columbia Teachers' Council (BCTC) and provides that the BCTC establish standards for those who hold certificates of qualification issued by the Ministry of Education. Section 10 (1) and (2) and section 13 (a) and (b) of the Act set out the objectives of the BCTC:

- Sets standards for the competence and conduct for applicants and for certificate holders (Professional Standards);
- Sets standards for the education of applicants for certification (Certification Standards); and
- Establishes teacher education program approval standards and determines if teacher education programs meet these standards (Teacher Education Program Approval Standards).

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR BC EDUCATORS

1 | Educators value the success of all students. Educators care for students and act in their best interests.

Educators have a privileged position of power and trust. Educators are responsible for the physical and emotional safety of students. Educators respect and value the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities, inclusive of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and other worldviews and perspectives. Educators foster students' positive personal identity, mental and physical well-being, social and personal responsibility, and intellectual development. Educators engage students in meaningful participation in their own learning. Educators treat students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect. Educators understand the importance of confidentiality, and protect student privacy, unless disclosure is required by law. Educators do not abuse or exploit students or minors for personal, sexual, ideological, material or other advantage.

2 | Educators act ethically and maintain the integrity, credibility and reputation of the profession.

Educators are role models. Educators are held to a higher standard and are accountable for their conduct on duty and off duty. Educators understand the law as it relates to their duties. Educators' individual conduct contributes to the perception of the profession as a whole. Educators know and recognize the importance of the Professional Standards for BC Educators.

3 | Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development.

Educators are knowledgeable about how children and youth develop as learners and social beings. Educators demonstrate an understanding of individual learning differences and needs. Educators recognize the importance and connection of cultural identity, ways of being and worldviews to student learning. Educators use this knowledge to inform decisions about curriculum, instruction and assessment. Educators work to create a positive, safe and inclusive learning environment to best meet the diverse needs of students.

4 | Educators value the involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.

Educators understand, respect and encourage the participation of families and communities in student learning and development. Educators consider the perspectives of parents/guardians regarding their children. Educators communicate effectively and in a timely manner with parents/guardians.

5 | Educators implement effective planning, instruction, assessment and reporting practices to create respectful, inclusive environments for student learning and development.

Educators have the knowledge and skills to facilitate learning for students, including learning experiences that reflect individual contexts and local environments. Educators value collaborative practice. Educators recognize and understand the interconnectedness of all aspects of teaching and learning and employ a variety of instructional and assessment strategies. Educators communicate effectively in either English or French. Educators know when to seek support for their practice and for students.

6 | Educators demonstrate a broad knowledge base and an understanding of areas they teach.

Educators understand the curriculum and methodologies of areas they teach. Educators teach curricula from Canadian, First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and global perspectives. Educators build upon student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect. Educators cultivate the values, beliefs and knowledge of Canada's democratic and inclusive society.

7 | Educators engage in professional learning.

Educators engage in professional learning and reflective practice to support their professional growth. Educators recognize and meet their individual professional needs through various learning opportunities. Educators develop and refine personal philosophies of education, teaching and learning that are informed by research, practice and the Professional Standards for BC Educators.

8 | Educators contribute to the profession.

Educators honour the profession by supporting, mentoring or encouraging other educators and those preparing to enter the profession. Educators contribute their expertise in a variety of ways, including opportunities offered by schools, districts, school authorities, professional organizations, post-secondary institutions and communities. Educators contribute to a culture of collegiality.

9 | Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to facilitate change. Educators value and respect the languages, heritages, cultures, and ways of knowing and being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Educators understand the power of focusing on connectedness and relationships to oneself, family, community and the natural world. Educators integrate First Nations, Inuit and Métis worldviews and perspectives into learning environments.

GLOSSARY

Note: These terms are included to assist the public. To the extent that there is any discrepancy between these terms and the definitions in the legislation, the legislative definitions prevail.

Certificate Holder: A person who holds a Certificate of Qualification or Independent School Teaching Certificate from the BC Ministry of Education. The Professional Standards are only applicable to educators who hold the BC Certificate of Qualification.

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Commissioner for Teacher Regulation: An independent statutory decision maker appointed under the *Teachers Act* to ensure concerns about teacher competence and conduct are addressed fairly and in the public interest in both the public and independent school systems as set out in the *Teachers Act*.

Director of Certification: A statutory decision maker whose mandate is detailed in the *Teachers Act*; responsible for the regulation of the BC teaching profession in the areas of teacher certification.

District: An area created or constituted as a school district under the *School Act*.

Educator: A person who holds or has held a Certificate of Qualification or an Independent School Teaching Certificate from the BC Ministry of Education. The Professional Standards are only applicable to educators who hold the BC Certificate of Qualification.

Ministry of Education: Under the authority of the Provincial Government, the Ministry of Education has responsibility for the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system in BC.

Parent/Guardian
(in respect of a student or of a child)

- The guardian of the person of the student or child, or
- The person legally entitled to custody of the student or child, or
- The person who usually has the care and control of the student or child.

School: A unit organized for educational purposes mandated under the *School Act*, the *Independent School Act* or the *First Nations Education Act*.

School Authority:

- A society incorporated under the *Societies Act*, or
- A corporation incorporated under the *Business Corporations Act* or a private Act, or
- A person designated, by regulation, as an authority that operates or intends to operate an independent school.

Student:

A person taught by the holder of a BC Certificate of Qualification.

Teacher Education Program:

A program of professional education that prepares a person to teach in the Kindergarten – Grade 12 school systems.

Teachers Act:

Teachers Act, S.B.C. 2011, c. 19 regulates and guides the work of the regulatory structure for the teaching profession in the BC Kindergarten – Grade 12 school systems.

Truth, Reconciliation and Healing:

Implementation of the Calls to Action outlined in the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) regarding acknowledgement of the histories, legacies and associated harms of the former Indian Residential School systems.

Ways of Knowing and Being:

Forms of knowledge construction and understanding the world by groups of people that allow them to maintain their cultures over time.



For more information on
the Professional Standards for BC Educators,
please contact the BC Teachers' Council:
BCTC@gov.bc.ca

