

# Peaceful Pond Cove: Our Schoolwide Action Plan for a Safe, Welcoming and Inclusive School Community



September 5, 2014

Dear Pond Cove School Families:

Our first days of school are off to a wonderful start! As students continue to settle in, we invite you to partner with us on our schoolwide action plan that we call **“Peaceful Pond Cove.”** During the past two school years and summers, members of our Peaceful Pond Cove Action Team have worked together to develop a proactive and explicit approach to build a welcoming, inclusive and positive school climate and culture. Thanks to a generous grant funded by the Cape Elizabeth Education Foundation (CEEF), we were able to fund professional learning with author, child therapist and anti-bullying expert Stan Davis to work at Pond Cove and deliver evening parent presentations during the 2013-2014 school year. Our work with Stan continues and we will keep you informed throughout the school year. The heart of this work continues to be devoted to the following expectations for students, staff and the wider school community:

- 1) We want everyone to always feel safe, welcome and included at school.**
- 2) We want everyone to be kind, helpful and respectful to others, even people who are not necessarily their friends.**
- 3) We want everyone to contribute to the school environment in ways that enable students to be the best learners they can be and so they can help others to be the best learners they can be.**

This packet of information provides important documents that include a “Thinking About My Behavior” problem-solving form, a chart of color-coded behaviors that range from low risk of interfering with learning to more high risk of interfering with learning, a continuum of responses for those higher risk behaviors and examples of posters of “green” expected behaviors for common areas around the school. We always consider these documents works in progress that we may revise as needed. Before reviewing the attached documents, please take a moment to read the following background information that informs our work and how we have developed our schoolwide plan that we call Peaceful Pond Cove.

All of us at Pond Cove are especially grateful to CEEF for providing us with funding to work throughout this past school year with Stan Davis. A former elementary school counselor and child therapist, Mr. Davis conducted staff development with us and delivered informative parent evening presentations. We continue to consult with Stan and plan to have him return for more parent presentations this school year. He continues to consult and conduct research with schools across the country on ways to build positive and responsive school cultures. Stan has written two books that we use to help guide our work: *Schools Where Everyone Belongs: Practical Strategies for Reducing Bullying* and *Empowering Bystanders in Bullying Prevention*. Stan has done extensive work with Cherisse Nixon on the Youth Voice Research Project out of Penn State University. Their research findings are included in their new book entitled *Youth Voice Project: Student Insights into Bullying and Peer Mistreatment*. Stan’s website <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com> also provides information on research-based strategies for reducing peer mistreatment.

The Peaceful Pond Cove Action Team is a group represented by all grade level teachers, special education, allied arts, school counselor, social workers, school nurse and building administrators. Fresh from collaborative work during our opening staff days in August, our entire staff has been guiding students from the very first day of school in learning appropriate social and behavioral expectations through review, reinforcement, reminders and role playing. Our team also has identified a K-4 continuum of children’s literature that focuses on common social themes in childhood that was generously funded by the Pond Cove Parents Association this past school year. Staff will continue to use this literature along with new titles as vehicles for classroom discussions and problem-solving. In addition to focusing on positive behaviors, we also recognize the importance of listing the things that students are **not** allowed to do. That way, students know what is not allowed and our staff will have common responses if students display behaviors with a low risk of interfering with learning to those behaviors with a higher risk of interfering with learning. We do not want to treat all unexpected behaviors in the same manner because some negative actions are more likely to cause harm than others. To that end, we have worked hard as a staff to develop and revise our list, starting with a wide range of behaviors that stem from fairly common to quite rare. We also have worked as a staff to sort them by level of risk of interfering with learning. A chart is included in this packet that categorizes specific behaviors by color. This same chart is displayed in large format in all classrooms and common areas throughout the school so that students and staff can refer to them as necessary. You also will find attached a chart of progressive responses from staff for red behaviors. Our color-coded continuum is described on the next page:

**YELLOW, ORANGE and RED BEHAVIORS are not accepted schoolwide. The following describes these three categories of low risk of interfering with learning to high risk of interfering with learning:**

**YELLOW: Low Risk of Interfering with Learning** All staff members will address these behaviors consistently using the appropriate mix of reminding students of what they should be doing, redirecting students to the appropriate behaviors, role playing, discussing what happened and brainstorming appropriate and safe ways to communicate and solve problems.

**ORANGE: Moderate Risk of Interfering with Learning** Staff members will address these behaviors using the appropriate mix of discussion, parent notification and having the student complete a “Thinking About My Behavior” form to detail what happened, what was wrong with a specific behavior, what the student was hoping to accomplish, what could have been done differently and next steps for moving forward positively. A copy of a student’s completed “Thinking About My Behavior” form will be sent home by the classroom teacher for parents to read, sign and return to school the following day. Depending upon a student’s age and ability, students may complete the form themselves, with assistance from a staff member or have an involved staff member scribe their responses. The student’s classroom teacher will document ORANGE behaviors and notify the principal, assistant principal and, as needed, the school counselor and/or social workers. If three or more consistent ORANGE behaviors occur within a short amount of time the principal and/or assistant principal will contact parents, meet with the student and involved staff to investigate further what may be causing a pattern of behaviors, always taking into account the actual behaviors and the student’s age and capacity for understanding.

**RED: High Risk of Interfering with Learning** These behaviors will be reported to the principal and/or assistant principal who will meet with the student about his or her actions and respond according to our red behavior chart. We will make every effort to reach parents or guardians by phone that same day if your child has done something in this category. A copy of the student’s completed “Thinking About My Behavior” form will be sent home for parents to read, sign and return to school the following day. In the event that a building administrator is not available to respond to a red behavior in a timely manner, our school counselor, one of our social workers or another designated staff member involved will address these behaviors.

Even with more serious behaviors, we recognize that we are working with young children who may not yet understand why these behaviors are unexpected or who may not have meant any harm. For these reasons, our responses always will focus on learning so that our students can build important skills to help them take responsibility for their actions, resolve differences and solve problems in respectful and peaceful ways. Our goal is not to have students focus simply on the colors of behaviors, but always to help them develop the intrinsic motivation to be happy and responsible members of our school community as they learn the importance of being safe, welcoming and inclusive of others.

We also recognize that not all students will have the developmental, cognitive and social/emotional capacities to follow appropriate expectations without tremendous support from adults. Therefore, appropriate responses will be implemented with kindergartners once our kindergarten teachers feel that their students have learned appropriate school expectations. Moreover, special education and general education staff also will work closely with students who have specific identified disabilities that may impact their understanding of these expectations.

In addition to reminding, reinforcing and role modeling positive behaviors, large charts that have been color-coded as GREEN behaviors are posted around the school to remind students what *is expected* in specific common areas including the hallways, cafetorium, bathrooms and playground. Examples of these posters are also included within this packet.

Why do we color code behaviors? Stan Davis provides the analogy of what adults typically do when speeding down the road. If the speed limit sign says “25 mph,” and one is exceeding that limit, the first instinct should be to step on the brake and slow down. As drivers, we know there is a range of speed limits from very slow within school zones and residential areas, transitioning higher on main streets and reserving the fastest speed limits for highways. Speeding fast in a low speed limit zone can cause unfortunate consequences so there are laws intended to keep us safe on the road. In turn, children learn to recognize there is a range of behaviors – from minor and unacceptable to more serious – that have a risk of interfering with learning at school. While our color-coded continuum helps them distinguish this range, the day to day community building in classrooms, reminders, positive reinforcement, role modeling, role playing, the “Thinking About My Behavior” process and other strategies provide children with a foundation for understanding and practice as we guide them in developing intrinsic desires to do the right thing.

We hope that this information about our Peaceful Pond Cove Schoolwide Action Plan has been helpful. Please feel free to contact your child’s teacher, our school counselor, social workers or us at [khasson@capeelizabetschools.org](mailto:khasson@capeelizabetschools.org) or [jnickerson@capeelizabetschools.org](mailto:jnickerson@capeelizabetschools.org) or call us at 799-7339 if you have any thoughts or questions. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and support with our Peaceful Pond Cove Schoolwide Action Plan and look forward to a spectacular school year!

Sincerely,

*Kelly Hasson*  
Kelly Hasson, Principal

*Julie Nickerson*  
Julie Nickerson, Assistant Principal

**YELLOW**  
**(low risk of interfering  
with learning)**



- Cutting in line
- Unexpected words that are not directed at a person such as “That’s stupid”
- Making faces at people
- Disrespecting others with rudeness; tone of voice and body positions

**ORANGE**  
**(moderate risk of interfering  
with learning)**



- Exclusion: threatening or stopping someone from having access to friends, peer group or participating in an activity
- Using unkind, biased language
- Name-calling directed at a person
- Starting or spreading rumors (true or false)
- Unwanted touching of non-private body parts – could include hugging, hand-holding, etc. – after being asked to stop by that person
- Using bathroom for anything else other than going to the bathroom or washing hands

**RED**  
**(high risk of interfering  
with learning)**



- Hitting, kicking, biting, grabbing, spitting and other physical actions that are likely to hurt or scare others
- Knocking over furniture or throwing things (food, rocks, snowballs, etc.) that are likely to hurt or scare others
- Name calling or other inappropriate behaviors based on race, religion, culture, disability or gender
- Swearing at someone
- Taking things that belong to others
- Touching private areas of others’ bodies
- Verbal, written or physical threats
- Vandalizing school property or another’s belongings

Pond Cove School Problem Solving Responses for RED (high risk of interfering with learning) Behaviors, grades K-4:

8/18/2014

Behavior	1 <sup>st</sup> Occurrence	2 <sup>nd</sup> Occurrence	3 <sup>rd</sup> Occurrence	4 <sup>th</sup> or More
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Knocking over furniture or throwing things (food, rocks, snowballs, etc.) that are likely to hurt or scare others.</li> <li>-Taking things that belong to others.</li> <li>-Swearing at someone.</li> <li>-Vandalizing school property or another's belongings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Meet with principal, assistant principal and/or school counselor/social worker to discuss behavior and complete "Thinking About My Behavior" form.</li> <li>•Call home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Meet with principal, assistant principal and/or school counselor/social worker to discuss behavior and complete "Thinking About My Behavior" form.</li> <li>•Restricted recess choices at discretion of staff supervising at the time based on actual behavior and student's age.</li> <li>•Call home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Meet with principal, assistant principal and/or school counselor/social worker to discuss behavior and complete "Thinking About My Behavior" form.</li> <li>•Restricted recess choices at discretion of staff supervising at the time based on actual behavior and student's age.</li> <li>•Call home.</li> <li>•School staff and parents set up individual plan for helping the student improve his or her behavior.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Individual plan</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hitting, kicking, biting, grabbing, spitting and other physical actions that are likely to hurt or scare others</li> <li>-Verbal, written or physical threats</li> <li>-Name calling or other inappropriate behavior based on race, religion, culture, disability, or gender</li> <li>-Touching private areas of others' bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff response based on actual behavior, student's age, district policy, and state and federal law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff response based on actual behavior, student's age, district policy, and state and federal law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff responses based on actual behavior, student's age, district policy, and state and federal law</li> <li>•School staff and parents set up individual plan for helping the student change his or her behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Individual plan</li> </ul>

Please circle: Orange/Red Behavior

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Thinking About My Behavior

1. What did you do? Start with "I."
2. What was wrong with that?
3. What were you hoping would happen when you did that? or Why did you do what you did?
4. What could you have done differently?
5. What do you need to do now?

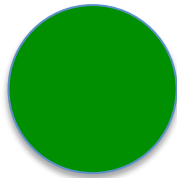
Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature\* \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please sign and return to school tomorrow. Thank you for your support.

Reviewed 8/18/2014

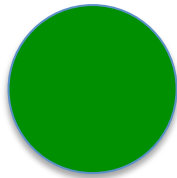
**Safe and Kind Actions  
Support Learning  
at  
Pond Cove School**



**Hallway**

- **Share space respectfully.**
- **Be in control of your voice and body.**
- **Walk in a line quietly so others can work and learn.**
- **Be safe and responsible.**

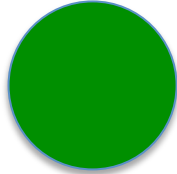
**Safe and Kind Actions  
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**Lunch Room**

- **Be Welcoming – include others.**
- **Share space respectfully.**
- **Be in control of your voice and body.**
- **Listen quietly and respectfully to others.**
- **Be safe and responsible.**

**Safe and Kind Actions Support Learning  
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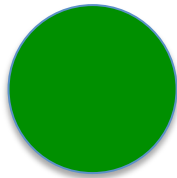


**Playground**

- **Be Welcoming – include others.**
- **Share space respectfully.**
- **Be safe and responsible.**



**Safe and Kind Actions  
Support Learning  
at  
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**Bathroom**

- **Share space respectfully.**
- **Be in control of your voice and body.**
- **Give other people privacy.**
- **Wash your hands.**
- **Be safe and responsible.**