

## **FLYING OF FLAGS BY SCHOOLS**

### **Background**

All schools are required to fly the National Flag of Canada and the Provincial Flag of British Columbia from either exterior permanent poles or permanently attached horizontal or angled poles. Interior poles may be installed at the discretion of the Principal.

The District will follow the federal guidelines for displaying the National Flag as published by the Canadian Heritage Ministry of the Government of Canada.

The District will adopt the Provincial Guidelines of the Protocol and Events Branch of the Government of British Columbia for the lowering (half-masting) of flags.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Flying the Flag**

1.1. “The manner in which flags may be displayed in Canada is not governed by any legislation but by established practice. The rules applied by the federal government are in no way mandatory for individuals or organizations; they may serve as guidelines for all persons who wish to display the Canadian Flag and other flags in Canada.”  
*From Protocol and Events Branch (Provincial)*

#### **1.2. Technical description**

1.2.1. The National Flag of Canada is a red flag of the proportions two by length and one by width containing in its centre a white square the width of the flag, with a single red maple leaf centred therein.

#### **1.3. Dignity of the Flag**

1.3.1. The National Flag of Canada is to be displayed only in a manner befitting this important national symbol; it is not to be subjected to indignity or displayed in a position inferior to any other flag or ensign. The National Flag always takes precedence over all other national flags when flown in Canada. The only flags to which precedence is given over the Canadian flag are the personal standards of members of the Royal Family and of Her Majesty's eleven representatives in Canada (i.e. The Governor General and 10 Lieutenant Governors).

1.3.2. The National Flag of Canada is always to be flown on its own mast - flag protocol dictating that it is improper to fly two or more flags on the same mast (e.g., one beneath the other).

1.3.3. When the National Flag of Canada is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, all present are to face the flag, men are to remove their hats, and all are to remain silent. Those in uniform are to salute.

- 1.4. Disposal of Flags
  - 1.4.1. When a flag becomes tattered and is no longer in a suitable condition for use, it is to be destroyed in a dignified way by burning it privately.
- 1.5. Obtaining Flags
  - 1.5.1. National and Provincial Flags may be ordered through the Manager of Operations. The cost of the flag is paid from school funds.
- 1.6. Flagpoles
  - 1.6.1. Flagpoles are divided into three categories: exterior permanent poles (located on buildings or on the adjacent grounds); exterior portable poles; and interior poles. Exterior permanent poles are to be fitted with a hoisting device such as a halyard and pulley arrangement to allow for flags to be easily changed and half-masted as required.
- 1.7. Obtaining Flagpoles
  - 1.7.1. The Manager of Operations will manage the supply and installation of flagpoles. The cost of the flagpole is paid from District funds.
2. Flags for Specific Events or Ceremonies
  - 2.1. Flags for specific events or ceremonies may be used. The School Principal shall obtain approval from the Superintendent of Schools or Secretary Treasurer to fly special event flags
  - 2.2. These flags would replace the existing flag for the duration of the event or ceremony and then be replaced by the original flag
3. Procedure for flying flags at half-mast or during periods of mourning
  - 3.1. The Federal Government and the provinces have established policies for flying flags at half-mast. This practice is not mandatory for individuals or organizations but is an adaptation of international usage and reflects long-standing custom in Canada.
    - 3.1.1. Flags are automatically half-masted upon the death of an immediate member of the Royal Family, and a current or former Governor General or Prime Minister.
    - 3.1.2. Flags are automatically half-masted in British Columbia upon the death of a current or former British Columbia Lieutenant Governor or British Columbia Premier.
    - 3.1.3. Flags are automatically half-masted on the following days:
      - 3.1.3.1. April 28, Workers' Mourning Day
      - 3.1.3.2. June 23, National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism
      - 3.1.3.3. Second Sunday in September, Fire Fighters' National Memorial Day
      - 3.1.3.4. Last Sunday in September, Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day
      - 3.1.3.5. September 30, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
      - 3.1.3.6. November 11, Remembrance Day

3.1.3.7. December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

3.1.4. Flags may also be half-masted at the request of the Prime Minister and/or Premier, for certain significant tragic events (at International, National or Regional levels),

3.1.5. Flags may also be half-masted (either District-wide or by Site) at the discretion of the Superintendent for significant local tragic events.

3.2. Half-masting for Mourning

3.2.1. Flags are flown at the half-mast position as a sign of mourning. The flag is brought to the half-mast position by first raising it to the top of the mast then immediately lowering it slowly to the half-mast position.

3.2.2. The position of the flag when flying at half-mast will depend on the size of the flag and the length of the flagstaff. It must be lowered at least to a position recognizably "half-mast" to avoid the appearance of a flag which has accidentally fallen away from the top of the mast owing to a loose flag rope. A satisfactory position for half-masting is to place the centre of the flag exactly halfway down the staff.

3.2.3. On occasions requiring that one flag be flown at half-mast, all flags flown together are to also be flown at half-mast. Flags will only be half-masted on those flagpoles fitted with halyards and pulleys. Flags hung on buildings by horizontal or angled poles, without halyards, do not have to be half-masted or removed.

4. Notification of when to lower flags

4.1. The Secretary Treasurer or designate will notify schools when flags are to be lowered and when they are to be raised again.

4.2. Principals and Managers will advise their Custodian when the flag is to be lowered and raised.

5. Current 'Rules for Flying the Flag' can be found at: [Flag Protocol - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/socdev/flag_protocol)

Reference: Sections 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act  
School Regulation 265/89  
Provincial Protocol  
Federal Protocol

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