

Personnel - All EmployeesProfessional Boundaries Between Employees and Students

All employees are expected to observe and maintain professional boundaries between themselves and students. A violation of professional boundaries will be regarded as a form of misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

The following non-exclusive list of actions will be regarded as a violation of the professional boundaries that employees are expected to maintain with a student:

- Using e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging or social networking sites to discuss with a student a matter that does not pertain to school-related activities, such as the student's homework, class activity, school sport or club, or other school-sponsored activity. Electronic communications with students are to be sent simultaneously to multiple recipients, not to just one student, except where the communication is clearly school--related and inappropriate for persons other than the individual student to receive (for example, e-mailing a message about a student's grades).
- Engaging in social-networking friendships with a student on social networking sites. Material that employees post on social networks that is publicly available to those in the school community must reflect the professional image applicable to the employee's position and not impair the employee's capacity to maintain the respect of students and parents or impair the employee's ability to serve as a role model for children. Employees shall not friend or follow students on any social networking site.
- Engaging in sexual activity, a romantic relationship, or dating a student or a former student within one year of the student graduating or otherwise leaving the District.
- Making any sexual advance - verbal, written, or physical - towards a student.
- Showing sexually inappropriate materials or objects to a student.
- Discussing with a student sexual topics that are not related to a specific curriculum.
- Telling sexual jokes to a student.
- Invading a student's physical privacy (e.g., walking in on the student in a restroom).
- Hugging or other physical contact with a student that is initiated by the employee when the student does not seek or want this attention.
- Being overly "touchy" with a specific student.
- Allowing a specific student to get away with misconduct that is not tolerated from other students, except as appropriate for students with an IEP or 504 Plan.

- Discussing with the student the employee's problems that would normally be discussed with adults (e.g., marital problems).
- Giving a student a ride in the employee's personal vehicle without express permission of the student's parent or school administrator unless another adult is in the vehicle.
- Taking a student on an outing without obtaining prior express permission of the student's parent or school administrator.
- Inviting a student to the employee's home without prior express permission of the student's parent and school administrator.
- Going to the student's home when the student's parent or a proper chaperone is not present.
- Giving gifts of a personal nature to a specific student.
- Discussing alcohol, tobacco or other illicit drugs in a non-instructional setting, such as describing a party that the employee attended.
- Discussing another student's or employee's personal matters when it is not appropriate outside of the instructional setting.
- "Grooming," which includes building trust with a student and individuals close to the student in an effort to gain access to and time alone with the student, with the ultimate goal of engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration with the student, regardless of when in the student's life the sexual contact or sexual penetration would take place.

Appropriate exceptions are permitted to the foregoing for legitimate health or educational purposes and for reasons of family relationships between employees and their children who are students in the District. A staff member seeking an exception must receive advance approval from his or her administrator. If a staff member is unable to communicate with an administrator in advance (such as in the event of an emergency), the staff member must notify the administrator as soon as possible, but not later than 24 hours immediately following the event.

Any person who suspects a District employee of engaging in any prohibited conduct under this policy, including grooming, should contact the Superintendent as soon as practical.

An employee who violates this policy may face discipline, up to and including termination of employment, and may be referred to the appropriate certification or credentialing agencies for further discipline.

A violation of this policy will result in referral to the Department of Health and Human Services, law enforcement, or both.

Legal Reference: LB1080 (2020)

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