

STUDENT AND STAFF INTERACTION

Employee means certificated, classified, and management staff; volunteers; coaches; and other adults who interact and work with students.

All district employees are expected to maintain professional, moral, and ethical relationships with students that are conducive to a safe learning environment. This administrative regulation addresses a range of behaviors that includes, but is not limited to, unlawful or improper interactions with students, but also boundary-blurring and grooming behavior that undermine the professional student-employee relationship and can lead to misconduct or the appearance of impropriety.

All employees shall:

1. Communicate and interact with students in a manner that respect a student's right to a safe and secure environment, as required by the California Constitution.
2. Maintain appropriate boundaries with students that are consistent with their role, duties, and responsibilities, and within accepted professional standards and norms of behavior for educators, and in a manner that a reasonable person would not interpret as inappropriate. Examples of boundary violations include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Dating, courting, or entering into or attempting to form a romantic or sexual relationship with any student, regardless of the student's age
 - b. Singling or seeking out a specific student, which may create an excessive emotional attachment for all parties or may be perceived as acting in a "parental" role
 - c. Kissing of any kind
 - d. Taking a student out of class without a legitimate educational purpose
 - e. Showing inappropriate videos, photographs, images or other content to a student
 - f. Inappropriate photographing and/or videoing students outside of district-sponsored activities or events
 - g. Touching a student (e.g., grabbing, tickling, and rubbing), which is not in keeping with what is professionally required and acceptable
 - h. Encouraging or allowing a student to sit on the employee's lap or sitting on a student's lap
 - i. Making sexual or sexualized comments or communication about a student's physical appearance
 - j. Consuming alcohol or drugs with, or offering, giving, or otherwise making alcohol or drugs available to a student
 - k. Giving or exchanging personal gifts, cards, or letters with an individual student for which it is directly or implicitly suggested that student is to say or do something in return

- I. Using student restrooms when staff restrooms are available
3. Avoid appearances of impropriety and refrain from unauthorized and inappropriate communications with students

Duty to Report

Employees who observe or has knowledge of a violation of this policy shall immediately report the information to an administrator or manager. When an employee observes conduct by another employee that creates a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, including sexual abuse, the employee must report the conduct to the Department of Children and Family Services and/or local police/sheriff's department in accordance with state law and district policy.

Investigation

Law enforcement and the Department of Children and Family Services shall investigate suspicious of child abuse. The District must investigate all other policy violations. Reporting employees are neither permitted nor responsible for investigating whether the conduct is inappropriate. Immediate intervention shall be considered and implemented when necessary to protect student safety and/or the integrity of the investigation.

Noncompliance

Employees shall be disciplined up to and including termination and/or legal action, for noncompliance with this policy.

Examples of noncompliance include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Failure to maintain appropriate boundaries when interacting and communicating with students
2. Failure to appropriately intervene or report when witnessing, observing, and becoming cognizant of prohibited or inappropriate student-employee interactions
3. Failure to fulfill duties and requirements as mandated reporters
4. Failure to report to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) regarding possible educational misconduct, as required by their role

Confidentiality and Retaliation

The district prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a report under this policy. Any employee who retaliates against such an employee, reporter, or other participant in the district's compliant process shall be subject to discipline.

Reporting employees are required to maintain confidentiality. Confidentiality protects both the student(s) and the employee who is the subject of the report. Failure to maintain confidentiality may impede the investigation and foster untrue and potentially harmful rumors.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent any represented employee from consulting with his or her exclusive representative.

This policy and regulation will be presented to and signed by all district employees as part of their initial employment, and as part of ongoing training.