

STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

The MSAD #59 School Board expects all staff members, including teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators and others, to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their conduct with students. For the purposes of this policy, staff members also include school volunteers.

The interactions and relationships between staff members and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust; an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in an educational setting; and consistent with the educational mission of the schools.

Prohibited Conduct

Examples of unacceptable conduct by staff members that are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

- Any type of sexual or inappropriate physical contact with students or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the board's policy on Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students;
- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher-student relationship;
- For non-guidance/counseling staff, encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, staff members are expected to be supportive and responsive and to direct the student to appropriate student support services.
- Sexual banter, allusions, jokes or innuendos with students; and
- Confiding in a student about your personal, family, and/or work issues.

Recognizing that staff and students are members of a small community, personal and professional lives may intertwine. If engaging in the following activities, Professional integrity will be maintained. Staff members will inform their building principal or supervisor, as needed:

- Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff members' home;
- Visiting a student's home, unless on official school business;
- Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by telephone, e-mail or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business);
- Exchanging personal gifts (beyond the customary student-teacher gifts); and/or;
- Socializing or spending time with students outside of school-sponsored events except as participants in organized community activities.

Staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with their building administrator or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct may constitute

a violation of this policy.

Reporting Violations

Students and/or their parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to notify the principal or superintendent if they believe a teacher or other staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy.

Staff members are required to notify promptly the appropriate building administrator or superintendent if they become aware of a situation that may constitute a violation of this policy.

Disciplinary Action

Staff violations of this policy shall result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to the Department of Human Services and/or law enforcement in accordance with the board's policy on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect.

This policy shall be included in all employee and volunteer handbooks.

Cross Reference: ACAA – Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
 JLF – Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

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