

# PROPOSED REVISION

5253

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries between Employees and Students

#### Purpose

This policy provides all staff, students, volunteers, and community members with information about their role in protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults. This policy applies to all district staff and volunteers. For the purpose of this policy and its procedure, the terms “district staff,” “staff member(s),” and “staff” also include volunteers.

#### General Standards

The board ~~of directors~~ expects all ~~employees~~ district staff to maintain the highest professional, ~~moral and ethical~~ standards ~~in when they~~ interactions with students. All ~~district~~ staff ~~members~~ are required to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning ~~through by~~ consistently ~~and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained~~ maintaining professional boundaries.

Professional staff/student boundaries are consistent with the legal and ethical duty of care that district staff have for students.

The interactions and relationships between ~~employees~~ district staff and students should be based upon mutual respect, ~~and~~ trust, and commitment to the professional an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between ~~adults~~ staff and students in and outside of the educational setting, ~~an understanding of child development,~~ and consistency with the educational mission of the ~~schools~~ district.

~~Employees are expected to exercise common sense and good judgment in their interactions with students. Employees~~ District staff will not intrude on a student’s physical ~~or and~~ emotional boundaries unless the intrusion is necessary to serve ~~an a demonstrated~~ educational ~~or physical, mental and/or emotional health~~ purpose. An educational purpose is one that relates to the ~~employee’s~~ staff member’s duties in the district. Inappropriate boundary invasions can take various forms. Any type of sexual conduct with a student is an inappropriate boundary invasion.

Additionally, ~~when interacting with students, employees~~ staff members are expected to be aware of ~~and sensitive to~~ the appearance of impropriety in their own conduct and the conduct of other ~~employees and volunteers~~ staff when interacting with students. Employees Staff members will ~~report~~ notify and discuss issues ~~to with~~ their building administrator or supervisor or human resources whenever they suspect or ~~are unsure~~ question whether their own or another staff member’s conduct is inappropriate or constitutes a violation of this policy.

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A staff member who has knowledge or reasonable cause to believe that a student has been a victim of physical abuse or sexual misconduct by another staff member is required by law to report such abuse or misconduct to the appropriate school administrator. The school administrator shall cause a report to be made to the proper law enforcement agency if ~~he or she~~ **the administrator** has reasonable cause to believe that ~~the~~ misconduct or abuse has occurred. During the process of making a reasonable cause determination, the school administrator shall contact all parties involved in the complaint.

**The board recognizes that staff may have familial and pre-existing social relationships with parents/guardians and students. Staff members should use appropriate professional judgment when they have a dual relationship to students to avoid violating this policy, the appearance of impropriety, and the appearance of favoritism. Staff members shall proactively discuss these circumstances with their building administrator or supervisor.**

## **Use of Technology**

The board ~~of directors~~ supports the use of technology to communicate for educational purposes. However, **when the communication is unrelated to school work or other legitimate school business, district staff employees** are prohibited from ~~online socializing communicating~~ with students **by phone, email, text, instant messenger, or other forms of electronic or written communication. District staff members are prohibited from engaging in any conduct on social networking websites that or use of technology with students that** violates the law, district policies or procedures, or other generally recognized professional standards. **This prohibition includes prohibiting staff from “friending” and/or “following” students on social media.**

**Employees Staff** whose conduct violates this policy may face discipline and/or termination consistent with the district’s policies and procedures, acceptable use agreement, and collective bargaining agreements, as applicable.

The superintendent or designee ~~is directed to will~~ develop **(1) staff protocols for reporting and investigating allegations of a failure to maintain professional boundaries and develop procedures and training to accompany this policy of failure to maintain boundaries; (2) training to increase staff awareness of their role in protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults; and (3) procedures to implement this policy.**

Cross references:	<a href="#">Board Policy 3204</a>	Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
	<a href="#">Board Policy 3205</a>	<b><u>Harassment</u></b>
	<a href="#">Board Policy 3210</a>	<b><u>Nondiscrimination</u></b>
	<a href="#">Board Policy 3421</a>	Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
	<a href="#">Board Policy 5215</a>	Conflicts of Interest
	<a href="#">Board Policy 5225</a>	<b><u>Technology</u></b>
	<a href="#">Procedure 5253P</a>	Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Employees and Students
	<a href="#">Board Policy 5270</a>	Disciplinary Action and Discharge

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Legal references:

<a href="#">Chapter 9A.44 RCW</a>	<b><u>Sex offenses</u></b>
<a href="#">Chapter 9A.88 RCW</a>	<b><u>Indecent exposure—Prostitution</u></b>
<a href="#">RCW 28A.400.317</a>	<b><u>Physical abuse or sexual misconduct by school employees—Duty to report—Training.</u></b>
<a href="#">RCW 28A.400.320</a>	Crimes against children—Mandatory termination of classified employees—Appeal—Recovery of salary or compensation by district
<a href="#">RCW 28A.405.470</a>	Crimes against children—Mandatory termination of certificated employees—Appeal—Recovery of salary or compensation by district
<a href="#">RCW 28A.405.475</a>	Termination of certificated employee based on guilty plea or conviction of certain felonies—Notice to superintendent of public instruction—Record of notices
<a href="#">RCW 28A.410.090</a>	Revocation or suspension of certificate or permit to teach—Reprimand—Criminal basis—Complaints—Investigation—Process
<a href="#">RCW 28A.410.095</a>	Violation or noncompliance—Investigatory powers of superintendent of public instruction—Requirements for investigation of alleged sexual misconduct towards a child—Court orders—Contempt—Written findings required
<a href="#">RCW 28A.410.100</a>	Revocation of authority to teach—Hearings
<a href="#">Chapter 28A.640 RCW</a>	<b><u>Sexual Equality</u></b>
<a href="#">Chapter 28A.642 RCW</a>	<b><u>Discrimination Prohibition</u></b>
<a href="#">Chapter 49.60 RCW</a>	<b><u>Discrimination—Human Rights Commission</u></b>
<a href="#">WAC 181-87</a>	Professional certification—Acts of unprofessional conduct
<a href="#">WAC 181-88</a>	Definitions of sexual misconduct, verbal abuse and physical abuse—Mandatory disclosure—Prohibited agreements
<b><u>Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972</u></b>	

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