

STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

The 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 and outside of the educational setting; and consistency with the educational mission of the schools.

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.

This policy is not intended to prevent normal interactions between staff members and student relatives, or between staff members and students who are friends of the staff members' children.

Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable conduct by staff members are situations in which intent of the staff member is to foster or maintain a non-sanctioned relationship with a student. Examples of sanctioned relationships are: school; service organizations; business; church; and family.

- 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 By Employees;
- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher-student relationship;
- Engaging with students in or allowing or encouraging students to engage in illegal activities;
- Unless properly trained in counseling techniques, staff shall not encourage students to confide personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, staff members are expected to be supportive but to refer the student to appropriate guidance/counseling staff. In either case, staff involvement should be limited to a direct connection to the student's school performance;

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- Sexual banter, allusions, jokes, or innuendos with students;
- Asking a student to keep a personal secret;
- Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns, or other private matters to one or more students;
- Being alone with individual students by closing a room door. Exceptions are health personnel, administrators, and doors with windows;
- Inviting a student or students to visit the staff member privately;
- Privately exchanging gifts (beyond the customary student teacher gifts);
- Maintaining private contact with a student outside of school by phone, email, Instant Messenger or Internet chat rooms, social networking websites, or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business);

Examples:

- A staff member of Broken Bow Public Schools using Facebook to establish or maintain a current student of Broken Bow Public Schools as a friend.
- A staff member of Broken Bow Public Schools texting private or secretive messages to current Broken Bow Public School students.

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

Staff members are required to promptly notify the principal or superintendent if they know of a potential violation of this policy.

Deliberate staff violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to the Department of Health and Human Services, Professional Practices Commission and/or law enforcement in accordance with the Board's policy on Child Abuse Reporting.

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